UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
JUN 8 1938
LIBRARY

The ARYAN PATH

Vol. IX. JUNE 1938 No. 6.

CONTENTS

PAGE

REINCARNATION ... 261
THE PATH OF SOULS—*By Merton S. Yewdale* ... 263
THE PROCESS OF REINCARNATION IN HINDU PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY —*By Mahendranath Sircar* ... 267
THE REASONABLENESS AND PRACTICALITY OF REINCARNATION —*By J. Middleton Murry* ... 271
REASON AND REINCARNATION—*By Raj Narain* ... 277
REINCARNATION IN THE ENGLISH NOVEL—*By Ph. D.* ... 281
SOME VEDIC TEXTS ON REINCARNATION—*By S. V. Viswanatha* ... 285
REINCARNATION AND KARMA—*By J. S. Collis* ... 288
I HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE—*By Douglas Pope* ... 291
REINCARNATION—A HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL REVIEW—*By Marjorie Livingston* ... 295
A PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION—REDEMPTION FROM SUFFERING AND SALVATION FROM SIN—*By Alban G. Widgery* ... 300
DHARMA RAJYA—FINANCE—*By H. Krishna Rao* ... 304
NEW BOOKS AND OLD—
A SOCIETY OF "SELFS"—PRE-EXISTENCE AND REINCARNATION —*By G. R. Malkani* ... 306
REVIEWS—*By B. P. Howell; Mahendranath Sircar; C. Delisle Burns; K. S. Shelvankar; Jack Common; Ph. D. and Keith Percy* ... 308
CORRESPONDENCE—PSYCHIC SCIENCE AND CRIME—*By Louis S. Vernon-Worsley* ... 313
ENDS & SAYINGS ... 315

51, ESPLANADE ROAD - - - - BOMBAY, INDIA

THE ARYAN PATH

51, Esplanade Road, Bombay, India

17, Great Cumberland Place, London W. I.

CONTRIBUTIONS:—Contributions submitted for publication should be typewritten, on one side of the paper only, with wide margin, and copies should be in all cases retained by the writers, as no manuscripts are returned.

The Editors hold themselves responsible for unsigned articles only. They are not necessarily in agreement with the views of their contributors, to whom they leave free expression of opinion.

CORRESPONDENCE:—Letters from subscribers and readers are welcome, with criticisms, comments or questions on any subject treated in the Magazine. Questions on Theosophical Philosophy and History will be replied to direct, or, if of sufficient general interest, in the pages of THE ARYAN PATH.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:—THE ARYAN PATH is published monthly. No subscriptions are accepted for less than twelve months, but subscriptions may begin with any desired number. All orders should be accompanied by the necessary remittance to the Manager, THE ARYAN PATH. Price: In India, single copy As. 12; per annum Rs. 6. In Europe, single copy 1*s.* 6*d.*; per annum 12*s.* or equivalent. In America, single copy 35 cents; per annum $3; all post free. Back numbers are obtainable on special application.

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

THIS monthly publication of 16 pages blends the past and the present by reprinting old articles from H. P. B.'s *Theosophist* and *Lucifer*, and W. Q. Judge's *Path*, as well as throwing the light of Theosophy on modern events. All articles are of practical interest.

Principal Contents for May 1938

My Books—*By H. P. Blavatsky*
A Buddhist Doctrine—*By W. Q. Judge*
Sankara Acharya
Crime and Punishment
The Buddha and Western Civilization
The Declaration of the U. L. T.
In the Light of Theosophy

Price: As. 2. Annual Subscription: Re. 1, 2*s.*, or 50 cents, post free.

AUM

Point out the "Way"—however dimly,
and lost among the host—as does the evening
star to those who tread thei path in darkness.
—*The Voice of the Silence*

THE ARYAN PATH

VOL. IX JUNE 1938 No. 6

REINCARNATION

In the doctrine of transmigration, whatever its origin, Brahmanical and Buddhist speculation found, ready to hand, the means of constructing a plausible vindication of the ways of the Cosmos to man....This plea of justification is not less plausible than others ; and none but very hasty thinkers will reject it on the ground of inherent absurdity. Like the doctrine of evolution itself, that of transmigration has its roots in the world of reality ; and it may claim such support as the great argument from analogy is capable of supplying.

—PROFESSOR T. H. HUXLEY

A consistent effort has been made in THE ARYAN PATH to allow able men and women to present their own points of view on the subject of Reincarnation, a subject that interests an increasing number of people but the importance of which is not fully recognized by all of them. As is our policy, we have allowed contributors who do not believe in Reincarnation as well as those who are convinced of the reasonableness of the doctrine to say their say. We have printed in every volume of THE ARYAN PATH more than one article on this specific subject, but this issue is almost wholly confined to a study of it and admirably mirrors the mental state of the educated classes in the Occident as in India : There is vital interest in Reincarnation but the desire to learn about the doctrine is vague and the effort to understand it in detail is somewhat rare. Articles by our Indian authors once again reveal the limitation which arises firstly from the desire to interpret doctrines of old Oriental psycho-philosophy by the wavering light of modern scientific theories ; secondly, there is the difficulty of penetrating the old-world language of allegory and metaphor. A subject that they are well capable of expounding has suffered at the hands of numerous Indian scholars who

are not able to throw off the influence of Western academical learning. Our Western contributors depend on their own thinking : speculating and reasoning they come near to some facts and truths ; these would not only be substantiated but enriched if a dispassionate study of the subject were prosecuted.

Both the Oriental and the Occidental enquirer have excellent opportunity to study the subject in authentic Theosophical text-books : *The Key to Theosophy* by H. P. Blavatsky and *The Ocean of Theosophy* by W. Q. Judge. In these two books the whole subject is examined in a thorough manner and they provide an excellent basis for impartial examination. It is not suggested that this examination should be undertaken with a view to accept the doctrine of Reincarnation, but primarily to understand what are the principles and the main details of this natural process. Two are the chief causes of confusion—first, the nature of the human soul and its relation to the Universal Spirit ; second, the nature of the mask, *persona* or personality, in the composition of which the Astral Double of the Body called in Sanskrit *Linga Sharira* plays a very important part. (In stressing the necessity of a study of the subject we might once again point out that between the exposition on Reincarnation of H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge on the one hand and sundry, pseudo- and neo-theosophical writers on the other there is an unbridgeable gulf.)

It is impossible even to outline in a single article all the teachings about Reincarnation : the human constitution has to be described ; also, the assemblage of matter and the formation of the body ; the nature of brain-mind and the commencement of soul-function in a new body ; death of the corpus and the intervening period of recuperation and rest between death and rebirth for the Individual Consciousness ; the intimate connection between the human and other kingdoms both visible and invisible. These and other factors are involved in the study. No subject, scientific or theological, historical or literary, can be grasped without a proper study ; and this is equally true of Reincarnation. The difficulty is that most people do not know—for which they are not altogether blameless—where to seek for all this information. Then there is the factor of mental laziness ; to the lazy as to the mentally obtuse such a subject as Reincarnation must remain a puzzle. To make the whole subject intelligible without mental effort on the part of the reader is an impossibility. And so emerges the central truth of Reincarnation—only self-effort leads through self-knowledge to Supreme Enlightenment.

THE PATH OF SOULS

[Merton S. Yewdale is a musician and a writer sympathetic with the Orient. In March 1937 he wrote on "Reincarnation in Earth Life", pointing out that even in one earth life man goes through a series of incarnations, each separated metaphorically by a death. In this article he surveys the path of Souls through a series of earth lives, each separated by what men call death.—EDS.]

We live in two worlds—the visible and the invisible. Between them the souls of human beings pass back and forth. From the invisible world souls periodically appear on earth in phenomenal forms to do the work of earthly life. From the visible world, obeying the inexorable law of their own being, the souls withdraw into the invisible when they have completed a single earth life. The invisible world is the home of souls; the visible world is the place of their expression and unfoldment. The human body is the living symbol of our presence in the visible world; the soul is the perpetual reminder that we have an eternal share in the invisible world and are forever a part of the Divine Energy and Consciousness.

On earth we live two lives—the life of the body and the life of the soul—the life temporal and the life eternal. The body completes its development in a single earth life, progressing through infancy, childhood, youth, young manhood or young womanhood, middle age and old age. The soul also completes its unfoldment and progressive achievement of control over its vehicles by passing through successive stages which to the onlooker parallel roughly infancy to old age. But whereas the body reaches its full growth in one earth life, the soul requires many earth lives to evolve a personality which shall allow it full expression; and these occur intermittently through a period covering æons. Also, whereas the body is subject to time and experiences an evolutionary growth which prepares it for earth life, the soul is timeless and experiences in the brain consciousness of its successive personalities a progressive spiritual awakening, an ever greater measure of integration and control.

The growth of the body is, in terms of time, a miniature presentment of the growth of the soul. As the body matures in the visible world of time, its age is determined by the gathering of the years. But as the soul is eternal and of the invisible world in which there is no time, its age in earth life is determined by the results achieved by its successive comings to earth. In the long process of unfolding in the material world, the incarnated ray of the Divine passes through its own periods of infancy, childhood, youth, young manhood or young womanhood, middle age and old age. Thus there is one age for the body and another for the incarnated soul—a body age and a soul age.

From the terrestrial view-point, a human being is a material body, which in turn is the human envelope for the soul. From the celestial view-point, a human being is an eternal soul, which periodically

appears on earth in a material substance to which it gives bodily form. Compositely, the soul is both spirit and matter, having an immortal body occupying the physical body, completely pervading it, conforming to all its growing changes and employing it as an earthly edifice in which to express and realise itself.

The people of earth are like a palimpsest. On the surface, they present a picture of a mass of human beings attached to the visible world during a single earth life and differing in body age. But underneath, they form a great panorama of soul beings living on earth but having their roots in the invisible world and differing in stage of unfoldment as from infancy to old age. The soul incarnated in a child may have its personality under better control than another soul incarnated in an aged body. How often it is said of a child, that it is very old for its years ; and of an old man, that he is undeveloped for his age. The distinction is that the soul incarnated in the child has got on farther with its task through efforts carried on in previous lives.

If we closely observe human beings, we can discern what we may, then, loosely term their soul age, by their response to the demands of earth life. The personality of what we may call the infant soul is instinctive, ingenuous, looking wide-eyed upon the world as a place of strange mystery, and living through earth life in a haze of wondering innocence. The personality of the child soul sees life as a playground, and experiences in its daily work and pleasure all the swiftly changing joys and sorrows of a child in the seriousness of its play. The personality of a soul approaching spiritual adolescence, as it were, views life through the eyes of romance, and at the same time becomes vividly aware of the pairs of moral opposites, which are at once informing and perplexing. The soul of young manhood and of young womanhood is awakened to the serious duties of life, to the reality and presence of the Divine Consciousness, realizes in brain consciousness the necessity of developing a harmony between the soul and the body. These are the stages in the life of the young soul.

The soul of middle age, so to speak, having lived through many earth lives and completed a great part of its work, returning after each earth life to its own plane of Divine Consciousness and impressing ever greater spiritual understanding upon each successive personality, seeks to live on earth by the spiritual laws, thereby demonstrating the power of the Spirit to enrich human life and to solve the difficult problems of earthly existence.

In what we may call the soul of old age, the incarnated ray and its Parent Soul are one. The personality, made dynamic by deep absorption into its own Divine Consciousness and acting under Its guidance, lives on earth not for self but for humanity ; acting as guardian of the concealed wisdom and expounder of the revealed, the spiritual and æsthetic truths of the invisible world.

Whenever a soul comes to earth it enters a body which is best suited to its stage and its purpose. In its earlier lives, the incarnated ray

instinctively turns to its Parent Soul for protection and guidance, just as a child runs to its parents. Also it is diffident and but faintly conscious of its association with the body and the visible world. But as earth lives continue and the soul is able to give its personality more and more of its own spiritual understanding and courage, while the successive personalities acquire increased confidence and come more to master the technique of practical living, body and soul come closer together. The soul gains greater control over the body and to the personality comes appreciation of the purpose and the power of the soul.

The upward progress of each incarnated soul, then, is a series of progressive awakenings. As it continues to reappear upon earth, it seeks to impart more and more of spiritual knowledge to each personality, in order that the latter may have more light to live by in the visible world and likewise may gain an understanding of the divine truths of the invisible world. The soul is the microcosm of the invisible world, and the body the microcosm of the visible. When the personality begins to be spiritualized, it begins also to surrender its own instinctive will towards earth and to live in accordance with the principles of the soul. This may be called the middle age of the soul. When the incarnated ray has become so spiritualized that it no longer is attached to material things and expends its energy in the interest of others ; when through its Parent Soul it feels itself a direct part of the Divine ; when perfect wisdom has been added to all-embracing compassion and complete self-renunciation to both ; then old age has been reached—and the period of complete flowering. The greatest old souls in history have been Teachers of mankind ; for it is spiritual truth alone which can bring to incarnated souls the remembrance of the spiritual past, a faith in the present and a hope for the future.

When souls are "young", personalities are held together in earth life by material interests ; when old age is reached each incarnated soul is a conscious part of the Divine, attached to every other soul by a spiritual bond of soul fraternity. That which appears to be a heavy, dense veil between earth and the invisible world, preventing our eyes from seeing through it and discerning the eternal truths which are behind, is nothing but an unawakened consciousness. The more the incarnated soul awakens and purifies its vehicles, the more transparent the latter become and the more clearly we can see the invisible world and its spiritual working and sense spiritually that which transcends thought.

In its early lives the incarnated soul is gentle, timid, groping ; when it has attained its maturity, it is powerful, pulsating, dynamic. As the personality embodies more and more the moral laws, the body becomes correspondingly more alive—not necessarily muscular, but vital ; rarified but enduring. Only a pure and sublimated body can receive and withstand the surcharged energy of the soul. He who is possessed by his own swelling soul, whether his be the spiritual energy of a fiery religious leader or the creative energy of a

genius in the fine arts, becomes a mighty spiritual force which, like a giant searchlight, hurls its light abroad so that men may see in the darkness. It is old souls who know the need of the Light among men, who bring to earth the moral laws and the spiritual ideals, which not only give meaning and direction to life, but supply the power by which man rises out of the material world and into the realm of the Spirit.

Since old souls consecrate themselves to working in the cause of humanity rather than for self-interest, the law of their being is to *give* rather than to *get*. Those who have unfolded to any considerable extent already are possessed of the spirit of giving; they are often discomfited and puzzled when, burning with the desire to give, they find earth life governed almost wholly by an instinctive impulse to get and to hold. Likewise, as these children are potentially rich in ideals and more at home in the invisible world, which they enter by means of their imagination, they often hesitate to enter the visible world and take an active part in practical life. Furthermore, they feel within themselves a personal wholeness, which they instinctively wish to preserve inviolate for the good of all mankind, and which they fear may be invaded or shattered if they allow themselves to be drawn too far out of themselves. It is as though, sensing their self-wrought destiny, they sought to keep themselves pure in the Spirit and free from the distracting entanglements of earth life until the time when they shall reach adulthood and be ready to undertake their life work. In their early years they are shy and retiring, dreamy, studious, yet having a vast amount of nervous energy, which gains in power all the more that it is conserved and not depleted by the friction of earth struggle.

When such incarnated souls come to maturity, they possess that excess power which is necessary to all work above that of self-interest, and which gives them inner certitude of the realities of the invisible world and the deep conviction that the reign of Heaven will eventually prevail upon earth.

Old souls are positive, inspiring, and ever on the side of growth. They are young in their affirmation of life, and old only in their spiritual wisdom. They are above and beyond all distinctions of race, colour, religion, caste or personal belief. They are the true internationalists, seeking to harmonize the conflicting elements of civilization and to bring about abiding peace, good will and justice. They are a living inspiration to all who travel on the Path of Souls.

MERTON S. YEWDALE

THE PROCESS OF REINCARNATION IN HINDU PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY

[**Professor Mahendranath Sircar** of the Calcutta Sanskrit College is the author of several volumes on Vedantic thought and on Mysticism.—EDS.]

To understand the Hindu doctrine of Reincarnation requires a clear idea of the soul. The Hindu philosophers generally agree in conceiving the dual nature of the human ego : its essential spirit and its changing individuality. The former is the real in us. It is immutable. The orthodox Hindu teachers generally accept the immutability and transcendence of the soul and its irresponsiveness to mutations in space and time. The mutability of the soul would mean its change and eventual destruction. Whatever be the nature of illumined existence—the peace of transcendent Calm or the exalted fellowship with the Divine —the soul is conceived to be eternally identical in being, quite independent of and free from the apparent changes which it undergoes through earthly existence. The soul has a fall from this exalted height, because of ignorance. This fall indicates its entrance into the creative order with a sense of its own *individuality*. This individuality, breeding the sense of separative consciousness and agency, is a kind of psycho-dynamism which builds up its own apparatus. It can conserve its experiences, mould its formation and react upon the environment. Thus the soul enriches its experience and gets its formation in the creative order ; but these do not belong to its essential nature. They are additions to its being because of its association with nescience and consequently with matter.

We cannot speak of the evolution of soul, for the soul is fixed and eternal. It has no ascent, no descent. Still the Hindu teachers trace the hierarchy of soul-monads according to their dynamo-psychism acquired from nature. This acquired nature is modifiable according to the forces that we draw and assimilate. This mould is not fixed, but is every moment being modified by acquired tendencies and the environmental forces to which they react. This variability of our nature accounts for ascent or fall in the scale of being. The Hindus maintain the law of continuity in the gradations of our existence—gradations determined by the degree of psychic receptivity, elasticity and fineness.

The psychic dynamism has its *initial force*, which determines its evolution. Evolution essentially depends upon the power of drawing the finer environmental forces and assimilating them. When the spirit-monads are less responsive, then evolution suffers in fineness and intensity. The spirit-monads are essentially the same in nature, but their capacity of absorbing fine forces differs. Each monad has therefore in it (1) the soul or the transcendental ego, (2) psychic dynamism, (3) the creative ego. The

latter two are associates of the self and do not disappear unless the soul has clarity of perception of its spiritual being, independent of psychic dynamism and its creative individuality. The Hindu doctrine of Emancipation implies the complete dissociation of the spirit-monad from its vehicle of earthly expression.

The question of Reincarnation can rise only in reference to the *creative individuality*, which functions on the creative plane and suffers emergence in the cycles of existence. Reincarnation implies the continuity of its existence in time and is possible because the psychic dynamism and the ego cannot disintegrate until the creative process comes to an equilibrium at the end of a cycle of existence. Even then it retains its unity and creative potency ; when the state of torpor is suspended, it again becomes active, and follows the line of expression and evolution determined by its inward impulsion.

The psycho-dynamic centre is a stable formation. Time allows opportunity for its growth and expansion and determines the nature of its definite emergence, but cannot affect it in the least. The idea of its discontinuity introduces confusion. The Hindu differs from the emergent evolutionist in denying the formation of the soul without a past history in the time-process. The emergent evolutionist does not doubt the continuity of the soul after its formation, but its sudden formation in the time-process is not consistent with its definite character. The definite emergence is determined by the inward potency, though the appearance may be modified by outward circumstances.

The dynamo-psychism is plastic. It takes definite formations, subject to the inner influence of spirit as well as to outer forces. Every psychic centre acquires a *character* through this struggle. This definite character determines evolution here and hereafter. The law of continuity alone gives our evolution a rational basis.

This law of continuity determines reincarnation, for reincarnation implies the continuity of the soul's urge for creative expression. This creative expression is undying ; there may be temporary lulls but no cessation or abrupt end. The forms of creative individuality do not admit of a rational solution unless their definiteness and continuity are assured.

This definiteness and continuity characterize soul-monads and creative egos. Reincarnation does not stand in the way of new expressions or even the emergence of finer powers for they are indications of how the psychic dynamism works. The form of reincarnation is determined by the responsiveness of the psychic dynamism to the forces of higher or lower planes of existence. But that is a different question, on which Occultism and not philosophy can throw light.

The law of *creative continuity* is connected with the *law of harmony* in the world of effects. It regulates the distribution of the fruits of Karma. This law is a universal dispensation regulating the cosmic and the moral order. The law of creativeness is not obstructed by the law of harmony, which regulates the order of causes and effects, but does not in the least interfere with it. In the subtler

world its effect is marvellous ; a good thought draws beneficial forces. Our thoughts and deeds determine our evolution. In Hindu Occultism, Karma is a wide term inclusive of thoughts, actions and psychic imaginings. Madame Blavatsky says :—

It is the Higher Ego, or incarnating principle, the *nous* or *Mind,* which reigns over the animal Ego, and rules it whenever it is not carried down by the latter. In short, Spirituality is on its ascending arc, and the animal or physical impedes it from steadily progressing on the path of its evolution only when the selfishness of the *personality* has so strongly infected the real *inner* man with its lethal *virus,* that the upward attraction has lost all its power on the thinking reasonable man.

The Hindus posit fourteen strata of existence through which the soul journeys—levels of ascent and of descent. Ascents and descents are determined by psychic purity or impurity. A pure nature with its finer aspiration naturally makes for more glorious evolution. Dullness of psychic dynamism gives inertia obstructing the finer evolution of our soul. The ascent can lead the soul to planes whence it can pass into the ineffable light ; and the question of reincarnation, excepting for a cosmic purpose, does not arise in regard to such souls. But those still functioning in the creative planes reincarnate after they have exhausted their merit. Passing into the higher region does not free them from earthly clingings. Heaven is not the place of eternal rest, but of subtler pleasures which these souls acquire by aspirations and adaptations. In the *Katho-Upanishad* a promise of such subtler delight was given by Yama to Nachiketa. The path of happiness is not the same as the path of the Good. The one is satisfaction of our sensible nature ; the other, satisfaction of soul.

The Hindu conception of Heaven is a plane to which the soul may ascend by psychic efforts, which yields satisfaction to the demands of our refined vital self and desires. It is still the life of desires (*Kama*). The satisfaction of desires strengthens clinging, and therefore with the loss of acquired merit, the soul comes down again into the earthly sphere to acquire fresh momentum for such an existence.

The less aspiring souls pass on to the abode of Pitris. They cannot have the glorious realisation of *Swar-Loka.* How long souls remain in these levels of existence nobody can say—but Reincarnation becomes possible by attraction to earthly life. So long as seeds of Karma are operative, souls, after a certain period, descend on the creative plane and by the law of psychic affinity choose their medium for further incubation.

Swarga or *Swar-Loka* is *Bhoga-Bhumi.* It is not possible to overcome earthly gravitation in *Swar-Loka,* which belongs to an almost identical scale of existence. Hence still finer evolution is conceived by the Hindu Occultist in the *Maha, Jnana, Tapa,* and *Satya Lokas.* This is the *Devajana, i.e.,* the path of undiminished light and undisturbed progress. Nobody who can walk this path returns again to earthly life. Eventually he reaches the light of the Supreme Brahman, and either gets identified with It or enjoys Its spiritual fellowship for ever. The Path of Pitris is laid in *Kama* (desires),

the *Deva* path in Knowledge (Supreme). The *Deva* path endows the soul-monad with such power that it can descend into the creative order of nature and take through psychic dynamism any form suitable to its purpose. This is called in Yoga, *Nirmana Kaya*. It is not true of souls absorbed in Brahman, but of those cosmically attuned to serve spiritual ends. They inspire new cycles of evolution directly or indirectly.

The Hindus advance psychological experiences in favour of Reincarnation. The soul can be so detached that it can see the body separated from it. It can stand outside and see the subtle thread of connection through which it can pass into and out of the body. This fitness, acquired by training, is an opening in psychic consciousness. With this training the parts of our being can be so modulated that the soul can feel its freedom and see the path of its exit. This indeed is the beginning of a new knowledge, called "Secret Wisdom".

The psychic experience can grow so luminous that it can revive memory of many past lives. Such adepts are called *Jatismaras*. Such advanced souls sometimes see the past lives of other souls too. (*Patanjali*, III. 18, 19.)

The psychic experience reflects the path of exit from, and entrance into, the body. There are different centres in our psychic being, outlets through which the soul can pass into higher or lower worlds according to its tendencies and *sanskaras*. The soul reincarnates according to these tendencies, for they determine its concrete nature. The nature of exit determines its future birth, if the soul is not psychically gifted enough to take the path whence no soul returns. One who takes the *path of the Sun* (*Surya-Marga*) does not return to earthly life.

Reincarnation affords the privilege of recreating destiny. It teaches us to accept the trials and the tribulations of life with sustained faith and hope. The moral momentum that one acquires by Karma, serves him in his evolution. Karma is associated with progressive soul evolution and it is within human power to curb nature's crudities and ensure spiritual and moral elevation. Before the spiritual harmony can be reached where nature offers no obstacle, a firm conviction of the continuity of our creative existence and freedom to reshape nature is imperative. Evolution, strictly understood, is the reassertion of spirit over nature, and reincarnation affords us this privilege. Freedom and power are great trusts; Reincarnation determines how we exercise them. We may fall or we may rise. Reincarnation gives the opportunity to make amends for the past and to build a new future.

MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR

THE REASONABLENESS AND PRACTICALITY OF REINCARNATION

[The contribution made towards the right spiritual reformation of Christianity by **John Middleton Murry** is well known. In this article he examines with his usual lucidity, the doctrine of Reincarnation and makes pointed reference to its place in Christian tradition and Christian Mysticism. In this connection we shall quote the following from *The Ocean of Theosophy* of W. Q. Judge :—

" For five hundred years after Jesus the doctrine was taught in the church until the Council of Constantinople. Then a condemnation was passed upon a phase of the question which has been regarded by many as against reincarnation, but if that condemnation goes against the words of Jesus it is of no effect..... Christianity is a Jewish religion, and this doctrine of reincarnation belongs to it historically by succession from the Jews, and also by reason of its having been taught by Jesus and the early fathers of the church. ... The Theosophist holds that whenever a professed Christian denies the theory he thereby sets up his judgment against that of Jesus, who must have known more about the matter than those who follow him. It is the anathema hurled by the church council and the absence of the doctrine from the teaching now that have damaged Christianity and made of all the Christian nations people who pretend to be followers of Jesus and the law of love, but who really as nations are followers of the Mosaic law of retaliation. For alone in reincarnation is the answer to all the problems of life, and in it and Karma is the force that will make men pursue in fact the ethics they have in theory. It is the aim of the old philosophy to restore this doctrine to whatsoever religion has lost it ; and hence we call it the ' lost chord of Christianity '."]

The doctrine of Reincarnation is one of the great historical solutions to the problems which Life sets to the human imagination. It is an answer to the deep desire of the spiritually awakened soul for divine justice. The spiritually awakened soul is conscious of two main orders of imperfection in existence : the objective and the subjective. In the first, " the miseries of the world are misery, and will not let it rest " ; in the second, as it were complementary to, and purifying this realization, comes the awareness of one's own imperfection—of the never wholly eradicable tendency to lapse into spiritual inertia, to become weary of the effort of well-doing.

These two kinds of imperfection, realized with acute pain by the spiritually awakened man, give rise in him to two desires or demands : first, for an order of existence in which the suffering and apparent injustice of this world shall be abolished, and second, for an opportunity of self-redemption and self-purification, not so much from what is generally called " sin ", as from the spiritual lethargy which appears to be a condition of continued physical existence itself. This spiritual lethargy is, no doubt, in the awakened soul, no worse than a form of the " wise passiveness " inculcated by Wordsworth—that is to say, the opportunity for fundamental physical renewal on which the activities of the spirit depend. There are many moments, I suppose, in the lives of even the holiest men when they feel

that the virtue has gone out of them. But no matter how deep may be our understanding of the necessity of this compelled repose, it is always *felt* by the awakened soul as a spiritual lapse—a partial surrender to the enemy, which is spiritual indifference.

Thus it follows that progress along the path of the spiritual life is inevitably accompanied by a steadily increasing awareness of one's own imperfection : the more spiritual the pilgrim actually is, the less perfect he becomes in the sight of his own inward eye. So that on the one hand the demand and desire for further opportunity for self-redemption becomes devouring : while on the other hand is the realization that the more completely one is subdued to the divine Love, the more conscious one is of the impossibility of ever being totally surrendered to it. These two subtly interwoven strands in the spiritual life appear to me to supply the pattern for the two opposed doctrines of Resurrection and Reincarnation, considered as answers to the subjective sense of imperfection. Theoretically and theologically they are opposed, but the opposition, seen from what Goethe called the standpoint of *Ur-religion* (absolute or eternal religion), is somewhat superficial. When religious intuitions are drawn out into theological dogmas, however necessary the process may be, the pregnant Contrary tends to become the sterile Negation. But in their spiritual signification the doctrines of Reincarnation and Resurrection correspond to two movements in the spiritual life, which are present, in varying proportions, in the experience of any one who tries to follow the path.

The spiritual doctrine of the Resurrection, as developed pre-eminently by St. Paul, is the satisfaction of a soul overwhelmingly conscious of its essential imperfection. No further opportunity of existence in the sensual world would remove that sense of imperfection. What he longs for, and demands, and proclaims, is the resurrection of the natural body into a spiritual body : a complete regeneration by passing into a totally new order of existence. And it is surely impossible to deny the magnificent passion and purity of the Pauline doctrine of the Resurrection. But precisely because it was the doctrine of a soul far advanced on the path, it easily becomes irrelevant to the spiritual needs of lesser men. The consciousness of imperfection which derives from an incessant and self-less striving for perfection is a very different thing from the consciousness of sin in the scarcely awakened soul. Hence the demand, satisfied and elaborated by Roman Catholic Christianity in the doctrine of Purgatory, for an opportunity of gradual redemption. But the doctrine of Purgatory and the Pauline doctrine of the Resurrection belong to different worlds of spiritual experience.

The doctrine of Reincarnation is, surely, immeasurably superior to the doctrine of Purgatory. And, on the other hand, the Pauline doctrine of Resurrection is easily assimilable to the great doctrine of Reincarnation in the Buddhistic form, whereby Karma is transmitted from individual to individual, until by this proc-

ess of refinement, in the perfectly righteous man the will to live is extinguished. Paul represents such a man, in whom "the will to live" is extinguished by the sheer clarity of his spiritual understanding of the ultimate incompatibility of divine love and existence in the world of time. But this overcoming of "the will to live" is not as it is generally represented by the superficial, the outcome of weariness, but of an intense spiritual awareness of the reality of the transcendent Good. In this Pauline purity the doctrine of Resurrection is simply a magnificent elaboration of the final stage in the process of Reincarnation as taught by Buddha and the Orphics, from whom no doubt indirectly Paul derived many of the elements of his own teaching. The Orphics taught the necessity and possibility of liberation from the wheel of birth, to which by the old punitive doctrine of Reincarnation men were chained; they proclaimed that men stand "in the need of redeeming gods, and of Dionysus in particular, and called them to turn to God by ascetic piety of life and self-purification: the purer their lives the higher would be their next reincarnation, until the soul had completed the spiral ascent of destiny to live for ever with God from whom it comes". The essential connection between that and the Pauline doctrine of redemption by the eternal Christ is plain. But the antecedent doctrine of punitive reincarnation is absent in the Pauline teaching, because Paul's background is Jewish, and of the straitest sect. The religious despair from which he is liberated is not the despair of incessant reincarnation, but of failure to fulfil the letter of an incredibly minute religious law.

The reference to the old punitive doctrine of reincarnation reminds us that these great primæval religious doctrines have undergone an age-long process of spiritualisation in which the spiritual heroes of mankind, "the great initiates", have played a determining part. There is a whole world of difference between Reincarnation as a doctrine of moral retribution—wherein it corresponds to the idea of Purgatory—and Reincarnation as a doctrine of spiritual redemption; and just as something between the doctrine of Purgatory and the Pauline doctrine of resurrection by and into the Divine Love is portrayed in the *Purgatorio* of Dante, so between the punitive reincarnation of the Upanishads and the completely spiritualised reincarnation of pure Buddhism, half-way forms are to be found, wherein the conflicting demands for retribution and redemption are reconciled. To such belongs the doctrine of Reincarnation as developed in the famous eschatological myth with which Plato concludes *The Republic*. The ethical profundity of this doctrine lies in the fact that the souls, on the completion of an existence, actually *choose* the life of their next incarnation.

> There came also the soul of Odysseus, having yet to make a choice, and his lot happened to be the last of all. Now the recollection of former toils had disenchanted him of ambition, and he went about for a considerable time in search of the life of a private man who had no cares; he had some difficulty in find-

ing this, which was lying about and had been neglected by everybody else; and when he saw it he said that he would have done the same had his lot been first instead of last, and that he was delighted to have it.

But in Plato the doctrine not merely serves to inculcate the necessity of the utmost effort to achieve the capacity of spiritual discrimination, which is the ability to distinguish between the true and the false Good, but it is also a solution of metaphysical and epistemological problems. His doctrine of "reminiscence", whereby he explains the fact of knowledge itself in the *Meno*, expressly requires the notion of pre-existence; while in the *Phaedo* Socrates appeals to the Orphic doctrine, and supports it by further argument, and concludes: "I am confident in the belief that there truly is such a thing as living again, and that the living spring from the dead, and that the souls of the dead are in existence." And he goes on to proclaim in language of incomparable limpidity the Platonic version of the Buddhistic doctrine: that the soul which has attained true wisdom passes at death to eternal union with God, while those which have not purified themselves from the sensual flux return to existence, in forms appropriate to their degree of achievement, or lack of it. No doubt, it is illegitimate to take the Platonic mythologies quite literally; and indeed on the literal plane they are in conflict with one another: but it is certain that Reincarnation seemed to Socrates and Plato the most convincing theory of human destiny, and also that it was something more than a theory with them —it was an integral part of the Orphic doctrine by which they were deeply influenced.

It is urged that there are two "fatal objections" to the doctrine of Reincarnation. "The first is that personal identity depends on memory, and we do not remember our previous reincarnations." To this it might be replied that a number of people (of whom I am not one) are convinced that they do remember them; and that the fact that the majority of people have no such memory is no more conclusive against its reality, than the fact that the majority of people are ignorant of the spiritual life is evidence against the reality of that. More serious—if Reincarnation is accepted in the literal sense—is the objection that "the soul, whatever it may be, cannot be conceived as a metaphysical essence which can pass indifferently from one body to another". As an argument against the cruder doctrine of transmigration of souls, this has weight; but as against the spiritual doctrine of the passing of the soul into another world, and its rebirth into mortal life, it has no validity. And these arguments, in so far as they tell against the doctrine of Reincarnation, tell equally against the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection of the body, in its crude forms.

The doctrine of Reincarnation, as I understand it, is an attempt to declare the final triumph of the spiritual life. If we imagine, as some of us are compelled to do by the religious sense itself, that no human soul is perdurably doomed, we must needs have a religious system which

offers the opportunity of redemption to all, and *continues to offer it until the redemption of all is accomplished.* Those who are now blind to the necessity of the spiritual life must journey on till their eyes are at last opened. And there is no denying that the doctrine of Reincarnation declares this in a form acceptable to the ordinary imagination. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the doctrine has had but an intermittent existence in the West, perhaps because it was in disaccord with the Western passion for activity. Salvation, for the Western mind, has had to be a business of urgency; and on the lower levels of religion, Western Christianity has been largely concerned with reducing turbulent passions to some kind of order: for which nothing less than the menace of damnation would serve. Indeed, we can see now, rather too plainly, that the removal of the menace of damnation is likely to turn Europe to chaos again.

On the other hand, those who are primarily concerned with the spiritual life (among the disciples of whom, though unworthy, I would reckon myself) have some difficulty in appreciating the necessity of an opportunity of purgation. It hardly entered the mind of Jesus or Paul; and Jesus conspicuously and characteristically solved the problem of human obduracy by declaring that a single and unconscious deed of kindness should save a man at the last. But where this sense of spiritual urgency and immediacy is less overwhelming, the necessity of a doctrine of purgation asserts itself, as we have seen in the case of Socrates and Plato. The same necessity was at work in the elaboration of the Roman Catholic doctrine of Purgatory. We may say that as soon as the religious intuition is under the necessity of accommodating itself to the demands of the human reason and the realities of average human conduct a doctrine of purgation is bound to emerge. And fortunately we have Plato's works in which we can see this compulsion at work. To my mind the doctrine of Reincarnation is far more reasonable, and far more humane, than the doctrine of Purgatory, with Hell in the background.

Nevertheless, as I have said, it is doubtful whether it would ever have served the secular purpose of keeping Europe in order. The prospect of being turned into a lion or a dog, with which Plato threatened those who had surrendered to their appetites, would have been without terrors for the robber-chieftain of the Dark Ages. Nothing less than a very literal Hell, and an eternity of that, would have given him pause. Reincarnation is a highly civilized doctrine, appropriate to religious philosophers in its esoteric and spiritualized forms, and even in its cruder forms adapted only to naturally pacific peoples.

It is, in short, that form of the doctrine of purgation which does the least possible violence to the sensitive human conscience. To what degree a doctrine of purgation will be found of vital importance personally perhaps depends on the individual. But the evidence of history is fairly positive that, if a spiritual religion seeks to establish itself as a widespread religion, some

doctrine of purgation, quite apart from the purification involved in the practice of the spiritual life itself, is absolutely necessary,—necessary from the point of view of the great religious teacher, who must provide a possibility of redemption for the millions who are incapable of receiving his esoteric doctrine, and necessary also from the point of view of those who dimly respond to his teaching, but are conscious of their own insufficiency, and without the opportunity of purgation would feel themselves condemned to despair.

From this angle the present position of Christianity is interesting. It has, at least on the middle and higher levels, discarded its mediæval doctrines of Purgatory and Hell, and has evolved no doctrine to take their place; nor does the need of evolving such a doctrine make itself felt. This seems to indicate that Christianity is in the process of becoming an esoteric religion once more; and those who have more talent and inclination than I have for peering into the future might speculate as to whether, if Christianity again becomes the real religion of Europe, it will adopt Reincarnation as its purgatorial doctrine. It is by no means inconceivable.

J. MIDDLETON MURRY

Pythagoras was reported to have been the first of the Greeks to teach the doctrine that the soul, passing through the "circle of necessity", was bound at various times to various living bodies..... He was accustomed to speak of himself in this manner: that he had formerly been Æthalides, and had been accounted the son of Mercury; and that Mercury had offered him any gift he pleased except immortality. Accordingly, he had requested that, whether living or dead, he might preserve the memory of what had happened to him..... At a subsequent period, he was reborn as Euphorbus, and was wounded by Menelaus at the siege of Troy, and so died. In that life he used to say that he had formerly been Æthalides; and that he had received as a gift from Mercury the memory of his soul's transmigrations, and of its temporary sojourns in the kingdoms of plants and animals; also the gift of recollecting what his own soul and the souls of others had experienced between death and rebirth.

After Euphorbus died, he passed into Hermotimus; and in that life he went into the territory of the Branchidæ, and, entering the temple of Apollo, he pointed out the shield which he had carried as Euphorbus, and which Menelaus had sent to the temple as a dedicatory offering. The shield had by that time rusted away until nothing remained but the carved ivory face on the boss of it. In his next birth he was a Delian fisherman; and finally he reincarnated as Pythagoras.

—DIOGENES LAERTIUS

REASON AND REINCARNATION

[Dr. Raj Narain of the University of Lucknow here presents us with eight arguments in favour of Reincarnation.—EDS.]

Several factors are pointed out by anthropologists as having contributed to the origin of the belief in Transmigration of souls. In West Africa, resemblance of children to parents or other relatives has been known to lead to belief in transmigration. Again, the animistic outlook of the primitive man may be seen to have paved the way for that aspect of the doctrine of transmigration which is represented in the incarnation of the soul not only in human form, but also in the form of a snake, a plant, a fish, in fact in any of the traditional eighty-four lacs of existence-modes (*yonis*). The phenomenon of sleep, moreover, may be said to have helped the growth of the doctrine. For, if the soul can leave an individual during sleep and re-enter him, it should be able to enter and be reborn in another individual.

Had transmigration of souls been merely a *belief*, the attempt of anthropologists to explain it would have had some claim to our consideration here. That Pre-existence and Reincarnation are much more than old and cherished beliefs will be apparent from the following arguments adduced in their favour :—

1. If higher biological types have appeared successively to, and not simultaneously with, the lower species then it seems also likely that higher psychological types within the same biological species would not be suddenly created, but would be produced as the result of a natural development of lower types. It is a fact of experience that higher stages of intellectual or moral power are attained by effort, training, sacrifice and voluntary mortification. The mere existence of a higher stage implies, therefore, preceding efforts, and if in our actual life there has been no room for these, we are justified in admitting that the necessary efforts were made in the forgotten past of each higher spirit, and, in the case of human spirits, they could have been made only in past human incarnations, implying, as they do, a knowledge and an experience of human conditions which could be acquired in that way alone. The analogy between the evolution of organisms and the growth of a soul shows the necessity of many human incarnations for each individual spirit, so that the greatness manifested in a brief lifetime may be considered as having developed in the course of numerous preceding lives.

The question is, why should others surpass us from the beginning, why should there be innate individual differences in instinctive equipment, disposition and intelligence ?

2. If we exclude arbitrary supernatural intervention as an explanation of the enormous inequality of human capacities, then we have to admit a past existence in which these capacities might have arisen and

developed. Human skill and ability grow only through practice and exercise. If Mozart, therefore, plays the piano at the age of five as well as the ordinary piano players after years of practice, we ask where and when this child has learnt what others learn at a much later age? He has had no time for it since his birth, so that he must have existed previously in conditions which allowed practice on the piano, and this could have been only in a past human incarnation. There are many such precocious artistic capacities for different arts—music, painting, sculpture, poetry. But it is not only precocity, but also talent—sometimes of a very high order—suddenly developing in later life, that indicates previous and forgotten practice, there being many latent abilities in the soul awaiting their opportunity for manifestation.

3. There is a chasm between the degenerate wretch, a prey to every temptation, and the saint, too holy to sin; no experience or discipline in a single lifetime can bring a soul from one side to the other. Some great saints have no doubt been sinners in their youth, but they manifested a peculiar character in their sins which differentiated them from the vulgar criminal and implied the possibility of ultimate conversion.

The sins of St. Augustine bear only an outward resemblance to those of a hopeless weakling; and very few criminals can become saints.

Moral disparity reveals the past of each soul and cannot be otherwise explained. We require new incarnations in order that the soul, remaining the same, in its own body and not in some incorporeal existence, may reach the state for which it was created. As long as all men are not saints the purgatory of successive incarnations must continue.

4. The idea of immortality of the soul presupposes a concrete representation of the conditions in which that soul has its eternal being. An immortality which would mean a total transformation of our own well-known soul into something totally different and inconceivable to us would break the link between temporal and eternal life which consists in continuity of spiritual existence.

Faith in immortality without reincarnation is inconsistent because it would not be the immortality of the soul known to us in the earthly conditions but an immortality of a different soul in other conditions, having little in common with the incarnated soul.

5. Great romantic love, whenever it happens, rare though it be, is a great revelation of pre-existence. Mutual exclusiveness and permanence, the objective characteristics of romantic love, imply an exceptional intensity of subjective feeling in contrast to the usual mutability of sexual passion. Mutual exclusiveness means the intense concentration for both partners of all charm and attraction in one single person and for ever; this infinitely exalts the quality of feeling, as the most perfect quality is the indispensable condition of permanence and exclusiveness. Permanence and exclusiveness appear, therefore, as the outward signs of some ineffable inward reality which entrances romantic lovers. Those who experience romantic love, therefore, know

at once, without being taught by anybody, that they have belonged to each other for centuries. Infinity of love, indeed, requires eternity of time for its full realization.

6. Romantic love between man and woman is only the first step towards raising human beings above animal selfishness. Disinterested and indissoluble friendship, irrespective of sexual difference, is also a revelation of the past relations between such friends and a motive for future common enterprises in successive incarnations. Such friendships exist only on higher levels of spiritual existence, and they give forthwith the immediate certainty of a long past in common. They are conditioned by the overcoming of personal and family selfishness and by a common positive aim of useful service to mankind.

7. The oldest argument in favour of transmigration is actual recollection of past incarnations. Tradition ascribes full reminiscence to Pythagoras and the Buddha, but only in recent times have such experiences been impartially investigated. H. Fielding Hall, in *The Soul of a People,* quotes several interesting examples of reminiscence in Burma. In 1911 Colonel de Rochas published a book, *Les Vies Successives,* in which he mentions several cases of reminiscence produced through magnetic suggestion of retrogression of memory. An interesting example of unsuspected reminiscence was published by Gaston Durville in the *Psychic Magazine* of 1914. This case is also reported by Charles Lancelin in his *La Vie Posthume* and by Gabriel Delanne in his *Documents pour servir a l'Etude de la Reincarnation;* other examples are also given in the works of these two men. Pierre Cornillier in *La Survivance de l'Ame* and in *La Prediction de l'Avenir* also quotes such examples.

A noteworthy point is that many who remember their previous life are children, and that as these children grow older their memories die away and lose their vividness. This is borne out by Buddhist literature and by Fielding Hall's studies.

It is interesting to note that the whole of the rich literature of *Jātaka* and the allied literature of *Nidāna* and *Avadāna* is based upon this phenomenon of reminiscence. Buddha himself regarded the capacity to remember one's former lives as one of the marks of attaining sainthood. It forms one of the three special faculties (*tevijjā*)—the divine vision, the divine hearing, and the clear recalling of one's former lives (*pubbenivāsa*).

Short of complete reminiscence, certain dreams may imply forgotten lives. If somebody born in the North dreams often of a southern country and always sees in his dreams the same persons, whom he has never seen in this life, then he may become in course of time convinced that he lived once in the country of his dreams and that he has there known the friends seen in these dreams. Sometimes people and places known from dreams are met later in the waking state and recognized.

Apart from such dreams, certain persons may be otherwise certain of their pre-existence; such a certainty is possible without any recollection of particulars. A subjective but

absolute certainty that one has lived many times on earth in human shape is a psychological fact which—for those who have experienced it—is infallible knowledge. Such a certainty modifies profoundly our whole life, specially if it is not produced by suggestion or by reading books on reincarnation, but suddenly illuminates our consciousness as a great personal discovery throwing a new light on every detail of our actual life. Such an intense and spontaneous certainty occurs in some persons of a very low level of education, totally unaware of the literary tradition of reincarnation. They usually do not like to talk about it because they are afraid of being ridiculed.

8. Besides the recollection of former lives we have to consider the predictions of a future reincarnation in a specified family. Such cases are quoted by Fielding Hall, and also by Lancelin, Delanne and Cornillier. The most famous instance of such a prediction within the last generation happened in the family of Dr. Samona in Palermo. Dr. Samona lost in 1910 a daughter, Alexandra, at the age of five years. The parents were stricken with grief; but one night the child's mother saw the lost girl in a dream and received from her the assurance that she would return together with a twin sister. The dream was several times repeated. The prediction seemed to be unlikely, as in 1909 Mrs. Samona had undergone an operation which lessened the hope of maternity. But on November 22nd, in the same year, 1910, two girls were born to her, and one of them, as she grew up, resembled her dead sister surprisingly, not only in her features, but in her gestures. When this fact was published a discussion followed in the press and Dr. Samona maintained the identity of his two daughters born in 1905 and 1910.

Taken together, the above eight arguments for transmigration are much more than a justification of an old belief. They amount to a fair scientific proof of pre-existence and reincarnation. If these arguments still fail to convince some then we may try to justify the doctrine of reincarnation from another standpoint. We may look upon it as a principle which works, as a useful postulate, a methodological convenience for explaining the phenomena of individual differences, prophetic dreams, paramnesia and reminiscence of past lives: phenomena which baffle modern psychology as taught at academic centres. It is more satisfying than the hypothesis of "just chance". It marks a decided moral advance in the life of an individual and the race, for it gives all conduct a moral meaning, and makes every man realise the seriousness of life and his own personal responsibility. In short we may uphold it as a great pragmatic truth.

RAJ NARAIN

REINCARNATION IN THE ENGLISH NOVEL

[Even though Ph. D. would in no wise claim this article to be exhaustive, it is astonishing to find such a wide field of reference to Reincarnation in English novels. The imagination of a Rider Haggard or a Marie Corelli has fascinated the public, no doubt, but probably has not forwarded a serious study of the doctrine of Reincarnation among the majority of their readers—which is a pity.—EDS.]

No other phase of the Eastern tradition has taken such a hold upon popular fancy in the Occident as the doctrine of reincarnation, which offers to substitute order and justice for the chaos which thoughtful people in increasing numbers have come to see in the world. The sense of relief which its acceptance has afforded the sensitive mind was admirably expressed by Algernon Blackwood when he wrote in *Julius Le Vallon* :—

To Julius Le Vallon the soul was indeed unconquerable, and man master of his fate. Death lost its ugliness and terror ; the sense of broken, separated life was replaced by the security of a continuous existence, whole, unhurried, eternal, affording ample time for all development, accepting joy and suffering as the justice of results.....

It is no wonder that when at last the concept of reincarnation did catch the Western mind, it lost no time in spreading.

Of all literary forms the novel is nonpareil as a mirror of contemporary ideas. It had scarcely established itself firmly in English literature before the East began to knock with growing insistence at the closed door of Western thought, a door locked about 550 A.D. when the Council of Constantinople anathematized the heresy of the soul's pre-existence. Echoes of the long-muted " lost chord of Christianity " began to sound in fiction in the first years of the nineteenth century, the first faint swell of the rising wave of interest.

As early as 1815 we find in Scott's *Guy Mannering* a reference, half-wistful, half-contemptuous, to the possibility that man has lived before :—

Why is it that some scenes awaken thoughts which belong, as it were, to dreams of early and shadowy recollections such as old Brahmin moonshine would have ascribed to a state of previous existence ?

George MacDonald in *The Portent* (1864) struck a note that is not dissimilar to Scott's and that has resounded how many times since in the writings of succeeding novelists :—

I suddenly glanced behind me and around the room, and a new and strange experience dawned upon me.....I said to myself, " How strange that I should feel as if all this had happened to me before ! " And then I said, " Perhaps it *has* happened to me before....And perhaps it has been happening to me at intervals for ages."

Ten years later appeared Mortimer Collins's three-volume novel, *Transmigration,* the hero of which, because of his firm belief in reincarnation in a shortly previous life, is represented as having entered this one with his memories of that earlier existence intact.

The theme appears in the writings of Bulwer Lytton, whose serious and often intuitive romances deal gen-

erally with things mysterious and arcane.

Marie Corelli's novels deal with reincarnation. Rudyard Kipling also deals with it, more especially in his poetry :—

They will come back, come back again,
as long as the red Earth rolls,

and in such a short story as "The Finest Story in the World", published in 1893 in the collection, *Many Inventions,* where he writes :—

Small wonder that his dreaming had seemed real to Charlie. The Fates that are so careful to shut the doors of each successive life behind us had, in this case, been neglectful, and Charlie was looking, though he did not know, where never man had been permitted to look with full knowledge since Time began.

Rider Haggard has used the idea of rebirth effectively in several books. It is the key-note of *Ayesha : The Return of She* :—

Learn now the reason that I draw my veil. Ye see this man, whom ye believed a stranger that with his companion had wandered to our shrine. I tell you that he is no stranger ; that of old, in lives forgotten, he was my lord who now comes to seek his love again. Say, is it not so, Kallikrates ?

He achieves a more realistic and hence a more eerie effect in *The Holy Flower,* published ten years later, in 1915 :—

"So you are the white men come back. ....Do you remember, White Beard, how, while we killed you, you said prayers to One Who sits above the world, and held up a cross of bone to which a man was tied who wore a cap of thorns ?.... You were clothed otherwise then", he went on, "and two of you wore hats of iron."

Arnold Bennett records in *The Glimpse* Morrice Loring's remarkable vision of his past lives, "one anterior to another, mere moments between the vast periods that separated them...And one life was not more important to me than another. All were equally indispensable and disciplinal."

In the quite independently written but curiously similar contemporaneous novel, *The Other Side,* by Horace Annesley Vachell, published in 1910, a character declares :—

I am a psychologist who, for grievous sins committed in previous existences, am constrained to teach physics to pudding-witted boys.

The Lama in Talbot Mundy's *Om* explains :—

We evolve from one state to another, life after life, being born into such surroundings as provide us with the proper opportunity. It was not by accident, my son, that San-fun-ho was brought into the Abor Valley to be born.

A dialogue in H. G. Wells's *The Dream* is interesting as showing how even a writer who balks at the idea of individual conscious immortality may yet yield to the fascination of the reincarnation theory and attempt, as it were, to smuggle in at the back door the idea of recalling a previous life :—

"I have had a dream, a whole lifetime, two thousand years ! ....A lifetime—childhood, boyhood, manhood... I have lived through a whole life in that old world...

"As it happened, death came early enough for me to die with a living love still in my heart."...

"To live again", said Sunray very softly.

"And love again", said Sarnac patting her knee...

"That tale", said the guest master stoutly, "was no dream. It was a

memory floating up out of the deep darkness of forgotten things into a living brain—a kindred brain".....

"I can well believe without any miracles that Sarnac has touched down to the real memory of a human life that lived and suffered two thousand years ago"...

"And I too believe that", said Sunray ...."I do not question for a moment that Sarnac lived that life."

"It was a life", said Sarnac, "and it was a dream, a dream within this life ..."

It is not surprising that reincarnation should crop up in the writings of Claude Houghton, who has been called "the foremost, if not the most widely known, exponent of the metaphysical attitude in fiction". In *Chaos Is Come Again*, published six years ago, one of his characters suddenly demands :—

"Do you believe in reincarnation?...I do—sometimes I'm certain I lived just before the Flood."

John Buchan deals with reincarnation, though, as he himself says, "in a minor sense" in *The Path of the King*, where the series of historic cameo sketches culminating in the great American, Abraham Lincoln, might be interpreted as implying successive incarnation of the same being.

If we stretch the "English Novel" of our title to mean the novel written in English, we can include this effective bit from *The Jacket* by the American novelist, Jack London :—

All my life I have had an awareness of other times, and places....I am man born of woman. My days are few, but the stuff of me is indestructible. I have been woman born of woman. I have been a woman and borne my children. And I shall be born again. Oh, incalculable times again shall I be born; and yet the stupid dolts about me think that by stretching my neck with a rope they will make me cease.

The development of the reincarnation concept in the mind of A. E. W. Mason as reflected in his novels is interesting—from his casual references to it in *The Broken Road* (1907) to its domination of *The Three Gentlemen* (1932). In the latter book old affinities assert themselves irresistibly; the elusive half-memories of an earlier life and lives gleam through now and again like lambent embers glowing fitfully beneath the ashes of forgetfulness. Many of the chapter headings are embroideries of Western thought, in prose and poetry, on the reincarnation *motif*, for example Nietzsche's "All things separate, all things again greet one other, eternally true to itself remaineth the ring of existence."

Mr. Mason introduces the theme again and again with effective subtlety, as when at the end of the book, he brings his characters in their modern incarnation to visit Rome :—

Far away the great city slept on its low hills. Adrian's eyes devoured it. He said no word at all but on his face there was a great perplexity.

He stretched out his arm.

"What's that?" he asked....."Yes, that new thing."

The chauffeur stared at Adrian.

"That, Signor, is the dome of St. Peter's."

Adrian dropped back in his seat.

"Of course", he said. "Of course."

But the wonder was still there in his gaze and in his voice.

"You hadn't expected it", said Sonia.

"No, I suppose I hadn't", he replied slowly.

And he hadn't. For it was eighteen hundred years since he had last seen Rome.

Mrs. L. Adams Beck's *The Way*

of Stars (1925) has for its subtitle, "A Romance of Reincarnation".

"They are never really gone. They return.

"'They have drunk of the waters of silence, and eaten the lotus of dream'—but life is immortal, and they come back, refreshed with sleep for the new life, bringing their sheaves with them".

"Their sheaves?"

"Things they have done and thought. What they have made themselves."

And again, one of her characters, referring to reincarnation, declares :—

"It transfigured all life into harmony for me. Where others see injustice, I see justice, in everything the working out of Law. Beautiful, wonderful!....I'm certainly not afraid of the working out of what I have done in past lives and in this, because even if it hurts, it will be to strengthen—growing pains, you know."

Her *House of Fulfilment*, published two years later, is full of the theme. One passage is typical of the stirring of memory below the surface, as it were, of normal consciousness, as presented by many novelists—an echo from a former life at once challenging and elusive, a bugle-note sounded behind us but when we turn there is no bugle nor any bugler to be seen :—

I followed, and for the first time in my life felt what I must call a ray of memory clear, sharp as a search-light, flung across night's dark—the certainty that somewhere, somehow, this had happened before. In a strange, narrow way, with new sights and sounds about me, I had once walked quailing to an interview with some man in whose hand was the shaping of my destiny. That memory walked beside me like a presence until I reached his.

A similar sense of past events casting their shadows behind is recorded in *Sweet Rocket*, by the American novelist, Mary Johnston :—

The momentary outlines shifted. There fell a sense of having done this times and times and times, a sense of hut and cave, so often, so long, in so many lands, that there was a feel of eternity about it. Rain and the cave and the fire, and the inner man still busied with his destiny!.....

The rhythm of the storm, the rhythm of the room, the rhythm of the fire, passed into a vast, still sense of ordered movement.

Let us go back, in closing, to Algernon Blackwood, with whom we began. He began writing about thirty years ago, and reincarnation appears repeatedly in his books. What he wrote "On Reincarnation" in THE ARYAN PATH for March 1930 an increasing number of Western thinkers—and among them many leading novelists—could echo; though for not a few, like Mr. J. D. Beresford, the hope that Mr. Blackwood utters has apparently become almost a reasoned certainty :—

Towards the end of a long life, filled with reading, thinking, searching for its explanation, I have yet to find a solution that solves its problems better than the explanation of reincarnation... The evidence, such as it is, lies heavily in its favour. A considerable majority of the planet's population accept it, and the older, the deeper the wisdom of a race, the more its teaching is acceptable.... Whatever doubt may whisper, I find myself hoping that reincarnation is the true explanation of life and its inequalities on every plane. There seems no sounder guiding principle, no juster, no more all-inclusive system.

PH. D.

SOME VEDIC TEXTS ON REINCARNATION

[S. V. Viswanatha, author of *Racial Synthesis in Hindu Culture* (Trübner's Oriental Series) here collects a formidable array of references to Reincarnation culled from Vedic texts.—EDS.]

Reincarnation is one of the most fundamental philosophical themes to which THE ARYAN PATH has opened its pages. The all-absorbing nature of the subject and the growing faith in the doctrine among Western thinkers are likely to elicit further illuminating contributions. Even material science seems to ponder over the possibility of an explanation of the theory on its own lines of investigation, as attempted by Professor Haldane in his book *Fact and Faith.** In the words of Madame Blavatsky, Reincarnation or Pre-existence "is the oldest and the most universally accepted belief from an immemorial antiquity".

But scholars that have written on the subject have all subscribed to the view that it cannot date in India earlier than the Upanishadic period, that it is not consonant with the teaching of the Veda, and therefore, possibly non-Aryan. Dr. Bloomfield expressed the opinion that the doctrine may have been borrowed from some of the non-Aryan tribes in India among whom were prevalent animistic beliefs that the souls on the death of men can pass into new forms, animal or vegetable. (*Religion of the Veda*, 254.)

But these vague ideas are totally inadequate to account for the belief in Transmigration, and the theory must, it would seem, have been a discovery of the school of seekers after the nature of truth who arrived at it on the one side from the popular beliefs of the peoples among whom they lived, and on the other, from the conception of the Brahmanas that death could be repeated in the next world. (*Cambridge History of India*, I, 144.)

Professor Macdonell concedes in his *Vedic Mythology* (p. 166) that in the Vedic texts, fire or the grave were believed to destroy the body only. But the real personality of the deceased was regarded as imperishable. Dr. A. B. Keith writes thus of the doctrine of transmigration :—

> This doctrine is not an early one in Indian philosophy. Most authorities are agreed that it can be found only in the Upanishads, that is to say, very little before 600 B.C., if indeed at all before. (*J. R. A. S.*, 1909, p. 574.)

Professor Hiriyanna repeats this view in his *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (p. 80), but states, citing Paul Deussen, "it is not difficult to trace its gradual development from earlier times". "The doctrine should be regarded as not connected with any primitive belief but as gradually evolved by the Indians themselves." He does not pursue the point further.

It is noteworthy that the Upanishads themselves trace the doctrine of Transmigration to the *Rig-Veda*. They cite the story of Vamadeva who sang :— "I was aforetime Manu, I was Sūrya : I am the sage

* See THE ARYAN PATH for December 1936, for critiques of the book by Sir Alexander Cardew and Prof. G. R. Malkani.

Kakshivan, holy singer Kutsa, the son of Arjuni, I master, I am the sapient Uśana; behold me." (*R. V.*, IV. 26, I.) Dr. Paul Deussen refers to this, but he cannot rely on it to prove knowledge of the doctrine to the Vedic Aryans. (*Philosophy of the Upanishads*, p. 317.)

Vedic scriptures contain a bewildering compound of religious symbolism, magic and metaphysics that "is utterly unintelligible to us whose spiritual development during the several thousand intervening years has bifurcated into quite a contrary direction.....words, verses, nay whole hymns in the *Rig-Veda* will and must remain to us a dead letter". (*Isis Unveiled*, II, 414.)

Rig-Veda, x. 58 contains the belief that at death the soul was separated from the body, and was capable of continued existence. The burden of song of the entire hymn of twelve verses is:—"Thy spirit which has travelled far.....we cause to come to thee again that thou mayst live and sojourn here."* The seventh verse in which the soul is spoken of as migrating to the waters or plants must be interpreted as containing the germ of the theory of metempsychosis.

The hymn addressed to the Dawn, "Ancient and eternal, again and again born, decking herself with the same form, the Goddess of Dawn wears away the life of all mortal creation", seems to reflect the doctrine of immortality of the soul (Dawn here), as distinct from the decay and death of all earthly creatures.† It is generally interpreted as alluding to the simple phenomenon of the appearance of dawn before the sun.

The text "Leave sin and evil, seek anew thy dwelling, and bright with glory wear another body", seems to contain a clearer indication of the theory of Transmigration.‡

Another Rishi sings: "Varuna, O mighty Lord, have mercy on me, spare me, let me not again enter into the house of clay (the earthy tenement)."§ This hymn is certainly a prayer for freedom from the cycle of births and deaths; in fact, the cause of rebirth seems also given in verse five as the violation of his (Varuna's) laws, through want of thought.**

That the Vedic hymnologists had knowledge—supposed to have been a later growth—that the nature of rebirth depended on the quality of the deeds done or virtue attained in the previous life seems to be indicated in the passage:—"Go according to thy merit (dharma) to earth or heaven."††

The simile of the soul being enshrouded in a new body like a man changing his old clothing for new is hinted at in a funeral hymn of *Atharva-Veda*, after muttering which, a new cloth is thrown over the dead

---

* Yatte mano jagāma dūrakam.....tatta āvartayāmasīha Kshayāya jīvase |

† *R. V.*, I. 92.10.

‡ *R. V.* x. 14.8. Hitvā yavad yam punarastamchi saṇgacchasva tanva suvarchāh |

§ *R. V.* VII. 89.1. Mū shu Varuṇa mṛṇmayīm gṛham rājan ahaṇgamam mṛlā sukshatra mṛlaya |

** *R. V.* VII. 89.5

†† *R. V.* x. 16.3. Dyām cha gaccha prithivīm cha dharmaṇā |

body.

This is the robe that first was wrapped about thee : cast off the robe thou wearest here among us. Go knowing, to the meed of virtuous action, thy many gifts bestowed upon the friendless.*

In another verse in the same context we have, "having collected wealth and ample treasure, come hither to the world of living beings".†

The doctrine in its essential features finds clearer expression in the following passages of the *Satapatha Brahmana.*

Now the spring assuredly, comes into life again out of the winter, for out of the one the other is born again : therefore he who knows this, is indeed born again in this world. (I. 5, 3, 14.)

And they who so know this, or they who do this holy work, come to life again when they have died, and coming to life, they come to immortal life. But they who do not know this, or do not do this holy work, come to life again when they die, and they become the food of him (Death) time after time. (X, 4, 3, 10.)

These contain the idea of retribution and transmigration for perfecting oneself, and that the number of reappearances depended on the nature of the deeds done and the knowledge attained.

The Book of the Dead reveals that the Egyptians had known and taught the doctrine of Transmigration, as Madame Blavatsky points out in *The Secret Doctrine.* (I. 277.) They themselves appear to have got it from India. When Apollonius of Tyana visited India, the Brahman Iarchus told him, "'the truth concerning the soul is as Pythagoras taught you, and as we taught the Egyptians', and mentioned that he (Apollonius) in a previous incarnation was an Egyptian steersman, and had refused the inducements offered him by pirates to guide his vessel into their hands." It is hoped that the Vedic texts assembled above, will lead to further research and throw fresh light on this fruitful field of Vedic study.

S. V. VISWANATHA

It is, I think, a really consoling idea that our present capacities are determined by our previous actions, and that our present actions again will determine our future character. It seems to liberate us from the bonds of an external fate and make us the captains of our own destinies. If we have formed here a beautiful relation, it will not perish at death, but be perpetuated, albeit unconsciously, in some future life. If we have developed a faculty here, it will not be destroyed, but will be the starting-point of later developments. Again, if we suffer, as most people do, from imperfections and misfortunes, it would be consoling to believe that these were punishments of our own acts in the past, not mere effects of the acts of other people, or of an indifferent nature over which we have no control. The world on this hypothesis would at least seem juster than it does on the positivist view, and that in itself would be a great gain.

—PROFESSOR G. LOWES DICKINSON.

---

* *A. V.* XVIII. 2.57. Etattvā vāsah prathamam nvagannapaitadūha yadihāvibhah purā, ishṭāpūrtam anusaṇkrama vidvān yatra te dattam bahudhā vibandhushu |

† *A. V.* XVIII. 2.60.

REINCARNATION AND KARMA

[Mr. J. S. Collis here puts forward some personal difficulties he has found in the doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma.—EDS.]

Madame Blavatsky, as every one knows, is best represented by her *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine*—which books AE (George Russell) considered "the most exciting and stimulating books written for the last hundred years", for H. P. Blavatsky is, he asserted with Samdip Lal, the great Tibetan scholar, "one of the very, very few Europeans who have a mastery over Indian philosophy and mysticism". It should not be overlooked that her *Key to Theosophy* is very satisfying for those who find it difficult not to get lost in the mountains and valleys of her enormous knowledge and occult insight as displayed in the bigger books. As if to give the lie to those who thought that she could never be succinct, she wrote *The Key to Theosophy* in Question and Answer form, thus showing that she appreciated other people's difficulties, and that she was no lover of vagueness.

It is a book which gathers up the threads of Theosophical teaching in small compass, thus giving rise in our minds to many trains of thought as each different facet is touched upon. The most outstanding, of course, is the theory of Reincarnation. It is to this doctrine and its companion, the Law of Karma, that I here wish to confine my reflections.

It must remain, I think, in the final analysis, a theory and not an established fact which can be proved beyond question. Nevertheless Madame Blavatsky's reply to the objection that no one properly remembers a previous existence, is very suggestive. She divides memory into Remembrance, Recollection and Reminiscence. The first two, she suggests, are faculties and attributes of our *physical* memory but the last is "an intuitional perception apart from and outside our physical brain". Science may say that this is fancy: but Theosophy says that reminiscence is "the *memory of the soul*".

Certainly this interpretation of Reminiscence has been favoured by a formidable list of the greatest names from Plato to George Russell. The latter, who, with W. B. Yeats, brought about the Irish Literary Revival not by dipping into Celtic wells of inspiration but into *The Secret Doctrine*, remained till the hour of his death an unwavering believer in reincarnation. For him it was just a question of experience. He said he believed that he would live hereafter because he had lived before, and came upon knowledge of past religions, lives, and loves in meditation, and "found others who knew the same things as I did and who remembered the places where we lived". His experience was not the Wordsworthian one of the splendid vision fading into the light of common day—not that pessimistic idea at all, but the reverse, the vision increasing while the animal spirits faded. And he steadfastly refused

to explain his visions and his reminiscences on any "scientific" basis. When a friend, Joseph O'Neil, suddenly came out with a book showing a singular power of entering into the past, but put it down to "ancestral memory" Russell insisted that such an idea was most unscientific and indeed ludicrous—for "an unchanging image cannot be maintained in an ever-changing substance". And he begged O'Neil to "give up the preposterous theory and believe with three-quarters of the human race that you have lived before and will always live". And he reminds him that he will be in good company "with the great Avatars, Buddha, Krishna, with philosophers like Plato and Plotinus, with poets like Goethe, Hugo, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Vaughan, Emerson, Whitman, Shelley and a score of others".

It seems to me that Reincarnation is bound to be true in some form or other. Few of us can fail at times to feel that the riddle of death is eternal life. The thing which I don't understand about it is why it gives such comfort and stimulus to people. I confess that it does not give me much pleasure one way or the other —for in so far as we practically lose consciousness of our past lives we might just as well be new souls as returning ones. Of course this may only be a mood—facing death, I might well do so with more satisfaction if I feel that my *essence* has a future, and that in fact an important part of me will not die at all. Having lived one's life one might well look forward—as AE did—to the new adventure called death. Yet in so far as the seeing eye, the feeling heart and the thinking brain are inextricably entangled with that which dies *for ever*, we know that in this sense there is no rebirth and that reincarnation can have nothing to do with personality.

However these are personal views dictated by personal temperament. What really concerns me here is the companion idea which Madame Blavatsky outlines with vigour and great clarity—the idea of Karma, of Retribution.

While I can accept Reincarnation as the expression of some profound truth felt by profound beings, I cannot feel drawn to it as a great system. My great difficulty with Theosophy —and I think I can say this in a paper which has never been averse to printing sincere points of view— lies in its reasonableness, in the rational explanation which it offers to the deepest problems of life. To me *incomprehensibility* is an intrinsic value. I respond more readily in worship to the incomprehensible fountain of joy and utter catastrophe than I would if that joy and that catastrophe could be explained.

Now Karma is a theory of Retribution, and those who embrace it feel that the problem of evil is thereby solved. It is their key to suffering. They look round upon the world, and seeing inequality and injustice and incomprehensible suffering they say that this man here and that man there are undergoing these trials because of sins committed in a former existence. I say that I do not respond to this rational solution to the problem. But even as a rational solution it seems to be inadequate. Theosophists say that the Supremely

Responsible Creator would be inconceivably brutal in allowing the unmerited misfortunes that we see everywhere around us. But in what way is He more merciful in the Law of Retribution for sin? If we do commit sins—and a definition of sin must always be an extraordinarily difficult thing—it is not our fault, we have been made like that by the Supreme.

That is my first difficulty with regard to the idea of Karma. It is not my last. The theosophist looks out upon the world and sees many of the finest and loveliest of human beings suffering all kinds of torment and injustice and pain, while others with extremely ugly souls are heirs to fortune and smiling days. Seeing this he says that those who are suffering are doing so because of their sins in a previous existence while those who are not suffering have no or few sins to atone for. That surprises me. I cannot understand it. If in a previous existence a soul has behaved so meritoriously as to deserve no suffering in a new incarnation we are surely entitled to expect that that beautiful soul will be manifest in the new incarnation—but this is not always so. Similarly if a soul is atoning by dire suffering for former sins one might expect it to be a poorly evolved soul—but facts do not seem to point to this. We find very often beautiful souls inhabiting the receivers of gross injustice and calumny, and we often find downright ugly souls inhabiting the receivers of what looks like unmerited happiness and pleasant fortune. And further, if I do not believe that there is some flaw in this theory of Karma, will not I harden my heart or at least ease my social conscience when I observe the corruption and wrong around me?

These are some of the difficulties in embracing—not the idea of Reincarnation—but the idea of Karma as a tight system of what theosophists call "merciless justice". In summing up my reactions, I would say that while Reincarnation speaks to a realisation hidden deep in us concerning some happy and wonderful surmise which not until death can be declared, the supporting programme of Karma is not only not necessary but bristles with difficulties on that very rationalistic plane which is claimed by theosophists as its most satisfactory aspect.

I am aware that there must be many answers to the rather simple difficulties which I have ventured to raise here. I know, for instance, that Madame Blavatsky distinguishes between Individuality and Personality. I regard myself in these matters as an inquirer rather than a critic, but I feel that simple objections are the ones which the majority of mankind must necessarily advance, and that the danger of too subtle answers to these objections is that they do not command more than intellectual allegiance.

J. S. COLLIS

I HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE

[Douglas Pope is the author of *Now I'm Sixteen*, the recollection of a working class childhood.—EDS.]

In the movement and distractions of everyday life to-day one seldom thinks, or gets a chance to think, of the world of spirits that may or may not exist. That world, or place, or dimension, about which we can go on wondering. The people who live in towns, with all their mechanism round them ; their proper little homes with all amenities, their so important jobs and their lack of imagination brought about by their surroundings : how can they contemplate the mystery of things ? That glorious wonder that has fed man during past generations, but which appears to be failing now. The Chinese, the Greeks, the Egyptians, the Europeans of the middle ages ; they all had their wonderings, their philosophies, religions. One cannot wonder nowadays ; it is impossible, in fact hardly decent.

How many people stand and look at the stars at night ? If they did, they would in a few seconds forget the stupid things that terrorize our life these days. They would for a few refreshing moments dream of other things, of other worlds, of life on planets, of the power or influence behind everything, of the largeness of the scheme of things, the smallness of our own particular world. They would wonder at the infinity of space, they would see life as a huge problem, not the petty existence in a small suburban house. They would feel spiritually uplifted, and would think of things such as religions suggest. They would feel themselves a part of these things, with a will to do good and uphold Truth. Then a passing car would remind them of the world as it is ; envy would return to them, and other soul-destroying passions. They would quickly forget their star-watching experience because they could not apply it to the hustling, grabbing, and scraping which form modern life.

But even though man cannot spend the time he ought on contemplation, the mystery of life must occur to him in quiet, unconfused moments. He might ask himself : what are human beings for ? They are born, they grow, and then they die, having spent seventy years or more occupying themselves here, on this earth or planet. What is it all for ? What happens to them after death, after life has fled from their physical body ? Do they continue ; do they enter another plane of existence ? Do they return, born into new bodies and so become reincarnated ?

For most people some religion or other serves to satisfy their doubts and fears. Even though there is little faith left in the European man, he still clings to a religion ; since, when he comes up against matters of mysticism, although this seldom happens, he merely applies the teachings he has learnt. To most Europeans, I think, the possibility of reincarnation seldom occurs ; even if it does, their Christian faith has nothing, or almost nothing, to say on the matter.

Western people are far less inclined to mysticism than the peoples of the East, and view such a theory as reincarnation with doubtful, and, really, unsympathetic gaze. The Westerner seems far behind the peoples of the East in deep philosophic thought.

During the Great War, many people were killed. Thousands of men lost their lives in a horrible conflict. To-day, a generation of young men are growing up who seem to lack that essential fire and faith which made their fathers and grandfathers men. Is it possible that these youths are the returned spirits of soldiers who saw, and died in, the horror of 1914-1918? This might explain many things; the lack of foundations in the characters of the young of to-day; the lack of self-respect; and the hopeless, uneasy, drifting feeling which appears to dominate their lives. It may only be the effect of modern conditions. I find it hard to tell.

Reincarnation is a very debatable subject. Since no proof of its correctness can be found, it is still in the realms of surmise and hope. Has the population of the world increased or decreased? If it has always remained about the same, balanced by decreases and increases, this might serve to prove that there is only so much spirit-life of this world. That only so many human beings can be created at any one time. Perhaps, if man could accurately define what his business here is and the position he holds in relation to other things, the likelihood of such a thing as reincarnation could more easily be gauged. Is man only an articulate animal, or is he more? It seems very hard to judge, since nine-tenths of the world seems to be composed of hardly articulate animals.

One night, about two years ago, I was in bed, preparing to go to sleep. It was still, autumn weather; rather mild and warm. I did not feel particularly tired, and the warmth of the evening annoyed me. I was aware that unless I was careful I should get no sleep that night; I felt almost feverishly wide-awake. I made a big effort; I sank not into sleep, but into something of a more psychic nature.

Out of a sticky blackness emerged what appeared to be a hooded monk. He stood at the top of a flight of stone steps. His gaunt grey face, which I could just see, was lit by a dim light coming through the door behind him. I was standing in the darkness at the bottom of the steps. There was no light except from the lamp or candle beyond the door. I could see no roof above me, but was aware of walls surrounding me. The place was airless.

The monk looked at me; he turned his head and I saw the awfulness of his profile. It filled me with horror. I was conscious of myself cringing back into the shadows, away from that cruel face. I felt the power he had over me. The mental power as well as the physical. He could have me tortured; he could terrorize me with the devilishness of his mind. His grey face seemed to hypnotize me; some fanatical quality seemed to surround him. I stirred myself with a great effort back to my normal self. I was wide-awake, away from that state that had most certainly not been sleep. I had felt, for one brief

minute, the despair of a prisoner in a dark, windowless, underground dungeon. The incident slipped back into time ; into the past, as we know it. It went back many years.

Why should all this have happened to me ? I am not a person particularly affected by the psychic.

I should have more readily rejected this memory from serious thought had it not had a sequel. A sequel not of much value to other people interested in reincarnation, for it does little to prove or help to prove the correctness of such a theory. The power of the incident can be felt only by myself. The almost subconscious realisations that come to one through such happenings are the fruits of such experiences.

This sequel occurred about a year after the first happening. I was going from Chichester to Arundel. When passing the little road which leads to Boxgrove Priory I suddenly decided that I would like to see the building. I cycled contentedly along, enjoying the warmth of the early summer day. I reached the Priory ; a somewhat gloomy place and definitely not too pleasant in feeling. I was intrigued by it, with an interest that, had I thought further, would have proved fear. On entering it, a sickening feeling of familiarity overwhelmed me. Immediately, I thought of the monk ; his grey, powerful face ; the light behind him ; the darkness of my dungeon. Then I felt certain that Boxgrove Priory knew what had happened to me several centuries ago ; and that I had been there before. I hurried away from the place, trying to shake off the chill that had settled on my unsuspecting body.

I cannot prove whether this is only a concoction of my mind or not. I can only have my feelings about it. One of the arguments against reincarnation is that one remembers nothing of one's former life or lives. This incident may serve as some sort of defence.

Several times in my life, when visiting a new place I have definitely recognized various parts of it. Perhaps the end of a wall, or the staircase in a house. In the same way I have suddenly realized that I am acting in an incident which I have seen and acted in before. The words the people are saying are familiar.

This is quite a common thing and in no way proves anything about reincarnation. It is merely that one dreams the future ; one sees these new places and new actions in the excursions of the subconscious when asleep. Yet if this sort of thing can happen, it doesn't take much of an imagination to see that other things are possible. This is only a small thing ; but, I think, a small version of a much bigger thing.

Sometimes I feel that man's religions and philosophies are but attempts to ward off what we fear may be our end. That is, that we just finish when we die, leaving no spirit to go on, only a non-functioning body. But what is our spirit ? Merely the working and the growing of our body, some scientists would have us believe. They may be right, but such teachings cannot lead to optimism and to a constructive life ; at least not amongst the ordinary run of people.

In this age of materialism, when

science seems to be trapping and utilising forces which would have amazed our forefathers, the mystical side of life has difficulty in presenting itself. Man cannot do without it, and a civilisation that does not admit it is bound to collapse. A civilisation cannot help collapsing when the religion it has been built on loses its power. When the people of that civilisation lose their faith, there is nothing left to work for ; they have expressed themselves, forming just one more example and lesson for future civilisations. Now, when everything seems to be crumbling, religions, philosophies, art and all that is fine in man, how can the theory of reincarnation stand a chance ? The present-day man has finished with mysticism, and any further dealings with it annoy and to some degree frighten him, for he realises that fear of some God should be part of his daily life, yet the very fact that he lives in this horror of an age denies it to him.

Man no longer is able to believe. Everything is being explained ; mysticism, which kindles man to high ideals, cannot live under the steel and concrete of to-day. So the theory of reincarnation passes by. Just one more uneatable food : uneatable because man's digestion is all wrong. His spiritual stomach is ulcerated ; and although man is more than ever in need of spiritual food and starving for it, he cannot eat it. Yet in his acceptance of spiritual food lies man's only hope.

DOUGLAS POPE

FIRST DEALER : Where do you come from ?
PYTHAGOREANISM : From Samos.
FIRST DEALER : Where did you get your schooling ?
PYTHAGOREANISM : From the sophists of Egypt.
FIRST DEALER : If I buy you, what will you teach me ?
PYTHAGOREANISM : Nothing. I will remind you..... You have to learn that you yourself are not the person you appear to be.
FIRST DEALER : What, I am someone else ; not the I who am speaking to you ?
PYTHAGOREANISM : You are that you now : but you have formerly inhabited another body and borne another name. And in course of time you will change once more.
FIRST DEALER : Why, then I shall be immortal and take one shape after another ? But enough of this....

—LUCIAN

REINCARNATION

A HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL REVIEW

[**Marjorie Livingston** is keenly interested in psychic matters, and last year published *The Key of the Castle*, which was reviewed in our issue of October 1937. Mrs. Livingston is convinced that the doctrine of Reincarnation must have been known to, and probably taught by, Jesus. It is interesting to compare her views with those of Mr. W. Q. Judge, quoted on p. 271 of this issue in the forenote to Mr. Middleton Murry's article. The origination of the doctrine of metempsychosis must go back as far as the origin of thinking man, and must even historically speaking have been widely known before the time of Pherecydes of Syros. We cannot agree with Mrs. Livingston's private interpretation of Reincarnation in several respects. If she would study the subject more philosophically than psychically, we feel she might modify some of her views.—EDS.]

Among the schisms which have rent the doctrinal philosophies of the world, no *casus belli* has been so bitter or so persistent as the subject of Reincarnation.

Historically, Pherecydes of Syros, one of the earliest of the Greek Philosophers, who lived during the sixth century B. C. is credited with originating the doctrine of Metempsychosis. Students of Occultism, however, will admit the probability, for which historical records make no provision, that the teaching of the ancient Mystery Schools was never revealed except to the Initiate, and Pherecydes may merely have been the first to voice outside the temple a tenet which was well established among the Initiated.

Herodotus, in his famous history, states that the doctrine of Reincarnation originated in Egypt, and he found the belief well established in that country when he visited it in the third century B. C. In Book II. 23, he states :—

> The Egyptians are, moreover, the first who propounded the theory that the human soul is immortal, and that when the body of anyone perishes, it enters into some other creature that may be born ready to receive it, and that, when it has gone the round of all created forms, on land, in water and in the air, then it once more enters a human body born for it ; and this cycle of existence for the soul takes place in three thousand years.

Pythagoras, who studied for many years in Egypt, is the best known of all exponents of Reincarnation, and the subject was an integral part of his great teaching. Probably in the welter of Greek pictorial allegory which graced the language at this period the purity of Pythagoras's actual teaching has been lost, and many puny and puerile embellishments have been wrongly attributed to him. The general opinion on the subject at this time seems to have been that human souls, departing at death from the body of their incarnation, remained within the ether which surrounds the earth. The air was considered to be dense with discarnate souls, and the new-born babe, drawing its first breath, could inhale into its own organism one of these disembodied personalities which would thus take up its abode in its own physical form, remaining there for its term of life.

Plato adopts the Pythagorean doc-

trine, and expresses it in the *Phaedrus* in an allegorical form. He extends the cycle of lives to ten thousand years, after which the individual soul must inherit eternal happiness or be condemned to punishment. He asserts also that the soul is not bound to enter any but a human form except by reason of continued faults.

Ennius, the Calabrian poet, is said to have introduced the doctrine of Metempsychosis to the Romans. He it is who tells in his *Annals* how Homer appeared to him in a dream, and had told him that their bodies had once been animated by the same soul, and that this Ego had once been incarnate in a peacock.

There is a flavour of Indian tradition in this romance, and it is from India that the modern world is recovering its ancient faith in the transmigration of souls. India has ever been the source and spring of a wealth of teaching, at once both practical and poetical, on the nature of Reincarnation. In post-Vedic India the belief in a life which was epic, recurrent, and immortal was gradually being replaced by a fatalistic acceptance of evil as the present effect of causes engendered in past lives, and a dispirited anticipation of poverty and misery, which was producing an attitude of indifference, indolence, and even cruelty. The most unhappy had, indeed, the comfort of the conviction that their misfortunes were reducing the sum total of their Karma. But they also believed adversity in future incarnations might be averted by timely gratuities to the priests, an abuse which was copied in another form by the Roman Catholics of the Middle Ages.

It was the persistence of this distorted and harmful view of a great philosophy which brought it in the course of centuries into discredit. In the East, where the doctrine persisted, a social condition sprang up which is well illustrated by the plight of the "Untouchables" in India, and by the exigencies of class-distinction and a lack of human sympathy incompatible with the God-consciousness within the soul which is the mainspring both of religion and of occult philosophy.

In the West, this intellectual deterioration of the concepts of reincarnation led to the final blow in the sixth century A.D., when the Christian Fathers pronounced it to be a heresy. From that time onwards, with the State in control of the Church, and later on with a powerful Vatican at Rome, and later still, with the uncompromising and superficial religious views of the Reformation, this innate teaching, inseparable from a true understanding of the occult significance of human purpose, was lost to the philosophy of the West. Even in the twentieth century, there is a large body of people who consider the doctrine of Metempsychosis to be un-Christian. Yet it is inconceivable that the Founder of Christianity did not only accept this philosophy, but actually taught it.

Considering the matter logically, and returning to the source of contemporary opinion, it is well known to students of the Occult that the Laws of Moses were founded in the Egyptian Temples where he himself studied prior to the exodus of the

children of Israel from Egypt. The Mysteries of Judea were separated into two divisions. The exoteric doctrine was given in the *Talmud*, and the esoteric mysteries were incorporated in the *Kabbalah*.

The tenets of the *Kabbalah* upon the subject of Reincarnation are precise, and of a much higher religious standard than that of popular contemporary conception.

Kabbalism postulates a human soul which emanates spontaneously from the Sephirothic Worlds and is incarnated in Malkuth, the world of matter, therein to gain knowledge and experience. This is the lowest point in the cycle of worlds, and marks the change in progress from Involution to Evolution. Three times must the soul inhabit a body, until, after repeated trials, it is enabled to ascend, purified, upon the Arc of Evolution. It is when the entire pleroma of pre-existent souls have emerged from the Tree of life, and have experienced Birth, Re-Birth and Purification, that the "Bride" (Malkuth) is called to the Marriage-Supper, and the Messiah is to become visible to the eyes of man. It was this teaching which most evidently was misunderstood by the untutored disciples of early Christendom, and gave rise to a concept of a "Second Coming" as accepted by the Western Church.

The fact alone that Jesus taught the ancient and sacred Allegory of the Bride and the Celestial Marriage is proof that He taught the *Kabbalah*. It is also generally accepted as a fact that He belonged to the occult School of the Essenes, a Brotherhood well-known for its adherence to the doctrine of Reincarnation. There is, in addition, ample evidence in the Gospels that a popular belief in Metempsychosis existed in the first century. Jesus Himself, in speaking of St. John the Baptist, makes the irrefutable statement: "If ye are willing to receive it, this is Elijah which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." And again, "Elijah indeed cometh and shall restore all things, but I say unto you Elijah is come already and they knew him not, and did with him whatsoever they listed."

The fact that the doctrine of Reincarnation is expressed in the *Kabbalah* rather than in the *Talmud* is evidence that the Jews regarded it as a precept to be reserved for the priests and students rather than a popular teaching to be given out in the market-place. Possibly, they had marked its reception among the Pagans, and the distortions which it had suffered in India, and so included it among their Mysteries.

Thus after centuries, the Western world, which for so long has lost this great philosophical theme, is regaining it in its pristine clarity, free from the horrors of a belief in mechanical predestination or the imprisonment of a human soul in bestial form.

A scholarly interpretation of the implications of Metempsychosis was given by Schopenhauer. Among his prolific writings upon the subject he says:—

> There is no separation of time and place between the wrongdoer and the sufferer. This eternal justice reveals itself to him who, having seen through the "Veil of Maya" has found that in the world of truth the division between individuals falls away, and that he who

does wrong to another has done wrong to his own self.

The point which seems to have escaped full significance in ancient exoteric doctrine is that the human Ego is essentially a free-willed entity. Its reincarnations, therefore, cannot be part and parcel of a mechanised cycle of predestination, but are, rather, successive opportunities for the fulfilment of Karmic obligations. The body is a necessary vehicle for the accumulation of experience or for the discharge of a mission. A soul returning to a life of want and trial may not necessarily be expiating Karmic crimes, but, rather, be undertaking a given experience or revealing certain truths with which it had been entrusted. Thus came the Masters throughout history, as Givers of Grace, not as victims of Karma.

A chain of lives is to be regarded as a necklet of graduated beads. They are many in form, but become one by association. There is a sequence of personalities, but one Ego.

There is bound to be a certain amount of friction between the indwelling Ego and the personal consciousness, and it is this friction, in common with all vibration, which is creative. It begets experience and development. The Ego, withdrawing at death, has a new phase of character to carry back into the great well of its own Being. Reincarnation is then the Intake and Outlet of the Cosmic Breath of Life.

It is logical, then, to believe that whatever time may elapse between physical births, the Ego must be allowed to withdraw to the full extent of its consciousness. It is travelling upon the Inhalation of the Cosmic Breath, and must rise through the worlds of the Sephiroth to the point of its genesis in Kether. It is here that the experiences and mistakes of the incarnation may be reviewed, and the recent personality fully absorbed into the spiritual centre.

A new incarnation requires a new projection of consciousness, a new out-breathing, a new descent, and the memory of past lives is thus only latent in the Mind that seeks re-birth. For this reason, Karmic memories are rare, and in many cases may only be revived by prolonged meditation.

This spiritual descent and re-ascent, especially in the case of undeveloped souls, may be a slow process. The personality persists for a considerable period following discarnation. For this reason, it is not surprising that many Spiritualists come in touch with discarnate souls* who do not even believe in the actuality of Metempsychosis, but look forward to a lonely and individual path within the small unit of their continuing personality.

The Adept, on the other hand, may surely reincarnate at will, for all Kingdoms are his, and his Ego may be present in all worlds simultaneously.

There have been, also, some well-authenticated cases where, death having intervened prematurely, or for some alternative reason, the personality has reincarnated within a few months. The famous example of Alexandrina Samona is a case in point.

* This is otherwise explained by H. P. Blavatsky ; see her *Key to Theosophy*—p. 121 *et seq.*—Eps.

This is an instance in which a child, dying almost in infancy, returned, after a brief period, to the same parents and earthly conditions.

Modern science, considered philosophically, supports the theory of Reincarnation, and also rids it of its accessory rituals so repugnant in its ancient form. In those days, the belief that a human soul could enter the body of an animal was the cause of universal vegetarianism among the devout. We no longer believe that flesh-eating is cannibalistic, for the doctrine of Transmigration of Souls, as the Ancients taught it,* has received no confirmation.

Metaphysical science, meanwhile, is arriving at the conclusion that all forms of matter are conscious in a greater or lesser degree. This idea of participation in physical substance is no longer repugnant when it is considered that all forms are soluble and transitory, and that the souls which temporarily inhabit them are also united by affinities, and by a common participation in universal consciousness.

Since all manifestation emerged from Not-Being under the symbol of the Cosmic Breath, then all forms are fundamentally interchangeable. Mind is Being manifested, and matter is the phenomena of Thought.

Reincarnation as we realise it today is the great Cycle of individual learning, experience and development, of which the end and the beginning are alike in Deity.

MARJORIE LIVINGSTON

All human beings go through a previous life in the sphere of Instinct, where they are brought to see the worthlessness of earthly treasures, to amass which they gave themselves such untold pains! Who can tell how many times the human being lives in the sphere of Instinct before he is prepared to enter the sphere of Abstraction, where thought expends itself on erring science, where mind wearies at last of human language? For, when Matter is exhausted, Spirit enters. Who knows how many fleshly forms the heir of heaven occupies before he can be brought to understand the value of that silence and solitude whose starry plains are but the vestibule of Spiritual Worlds? He feels his way amid the void, makes trial of nothingness, and then at last his eyes revert upon the Path. Then follow other existences—all to be lived to reach the place where Light effulgent shines. Death is the post-house of the journey. A lifetime may be needed merely to gain the virtues which annul the errors of man's preceding life....

The virtues we acquire, which develop slowly within us, are the invisible links which bind each one of our existences to the others—existences which the spirit alone remembers, for Matter has no memory for spiritual things. Thought alone holds the tradition of the bygone life. The endless legacy of the past to the present is the secret source of human genius....

—HONORÉ DE BALZAC.

---

* This too is fully explained; see "Transmigration of the Life Atoms", by H. P. Blavatsky—*The Theosophical Movement* for May 1934; also "Transmigration into Animal Forms" in *The Theosophical Movement* for July 1937.—EDS.

A PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

IV.—REDEMPTION FROM SUFFERING AND SALVATION FROM SIN

[Mr. Alban G. Widgery, at present Professor of Philosophy at the Duke University (U.S.A.), delivered the Upton Lectures in Oxford last November. Special arrangements made with him have made possible the publication of the six lectures in condensed form as six articles, the fourth of which we give this month.—Eds.]

The destiny of man as viewed in the religions involves his redemption from suffering and his salvation from sin. There have been forms of exposition which have represented suffering and sin as merely negative. The only and sufficient basis for rejection of that view is an appeal to experience. The pain of toothache is just as positive as the pleasurable sensation of sun bathing ; the grief at the loss of one's child just as positive as the joy the bride feels in her marriage. The sinful attitude of hatred is no less positive than the virtuous attitude of affection. Any form of philosophising which is supposed to show that evil is merely illusory may be used with equal cogency to establish that good is illusory also.

Suffering and sin, error and ugliness, constitute the basis for the so-called problem of evil. To say there is "really" no evil is simply to dismiss the problem. No theoretical answer has been found to the question : Why does existence include evil ? What thought can do is to investigate the nature of evil and seek ways by which it may be transcended or eradicated. For to admit the reality of evil does not necessitate the acceptance of the idea that it is and must be permanent. There is experience of the beginning and the cessation of particular evils.

The concern of the religions in this direction has been primarily with the nature of evil and the manner by which man may be released from it, or at least be able to bear it with equanimity. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism have insisted on a relation between suffering, sin, and error, and have pointed to the attainment of knowledge as essential to release. Even orthodox Islām has urged the necessity for acceptance of the Qurān, and Christianity has stressed the importance of the Bible and the creeds. But though knowledge be involved in the awareness of the nature of evil and of the contrasted good and of the "way" from one to the other, all these religions imply attitudes of mind to seek the required knowledge and to apply it when it is obtained.

That suffering and sin in many instances involve relations beyond an individual does not constitute a rebuttal of the view that suffering and sin are experienced by individuals. Religions in this regard concentrate attention on individuals. It is the individual who has to acquire knowledge, who has to adopt the appropriate attitudes, if suffering and sin

are to be overcome. There is no possibility of showing that there is any suffering or sin or redemption or salvation outside the experiences of individuals. This is a central point for a philosophy of religion : arguments to the contrary succeed in doing no more than show that he suffers and sins and finds release with relation to an environment. And there need be no quibble as to what is meant by an " individual " : it is a particular spirit associated with a particular physical body. Whatever philosophical expressions may have been adopted in Advaitist Hinduism in its ultimate account of the individual, Hinduism starts, as all religions start, with an insistence on the particular finite human being as the one that sins and suffers.

That is quite clear in the doctrine of the Law of Karma that is a general feature of most Oriental religions. That Law is relevant to particular finite beings as such. According to it an individual's happiness and misery are proportionate to his virtue and his sin, following as an inevitable consequence. This doctrine is obviously not based on the experience of the life we now know. For in it there is suffering with regard to which no sin can be discovered as cause ; and some sins seem to be committed and no suffering to follow. This situation is met by the affirmation of a series of lives so that the sin in one may produce suffering in a later one. There could, of course, be a doctrine of transmigration without a doctrine of karma. Even if it could be shown that reincarnation is a fact, the truth of the doctrine of karma would not follow. Empirically it could only be justified as the universal principle it is affirmed to be, if the whole of all lives could be surveyed. On the other hand there is no rational necessity in the doctrine. Reason cannot determine that existence may not be such that suffering and sin are not commensurate. What then is the basis for a doctrine so widespread ? Apparently a notion of causality and a moral apprehension of justice. There is a passage of thought from the conviction that it is the sinner and he alone who should suffer,—and that in proportion to his sin,—to the affirmation that existence is so constituted that in the long run it is always so.

A philosophy of religion cannot accept this doctrine in any external or mechanical form. Its central significance is that peace, salvation, cannot be achieved while the least iota of sinful attitude remains. The individual is to recognise that there is no escape from discontent and suffering that does not involve his own attitude. Ultimately he cannot, if he is serious, ignore the fact that the religions in accepting this view as a fundamental principle have depended on the religious intuitions of their great leaders and saints for whom it has the character of a directly apprehended feature of existence. It is in the freedom of the spirit, insisted on in the second article, that the possibility of salvation in this direction lies, for that involves the capacity of repeated spiritual resurrection. However much an individual may suffer from his own past, it is open for him to change his attitude and to strive for the good. A philosophy of religion based on actual

religion cannot but accept this principle as a fundamental truth concerning salvation.

No view which fails to recognise this individualistic aspect of suffering and sin, redemption and salvation, can do justice to religion as actually found. That, however, is only one side of the matter. Nevertheless there have been tendencies in the religions either to exaggerate or to ignore it. On the one hand it has been contended that all redemption and salvation is by the self alone ; and on the other that no man can save himself. Such positions are mutually exclusive. Neither of them accords with the general character of religion in history. There are ample expressions of the importance, even of the centrality, of the attitude of the individual in Buddhism, but it is not exclusive. Thus the individual is not compelled to accept the teachings of the Buddha or to enter the Sangha : his exercise of his freedom is his own responsibility. But Buddhism has insisted on the need of right knowledge, and maintained that this has come to men in the " enlightenment " of Gautama. His teaching is a " saving knowledge " ; he " turned the wheel of the law " that others might learn the way to redemption. And that way, the noble eightfold path, leads to redemption because the fundamental nature of existence is one of lawfulness.

Hinduism has diverse forms of expression. According to Advaitist exposition redemption and salvation are possible because man is not merely the finite being he may apprehend himself to be : only in and through the absolute Brahman is there release from discontent. Theistic and polytheistic forms of expression refer to the saving power of divine grace and mercy. For Jainism also redemption is possible just because the apparent finite individual is not merely such : it is in and through an omnipotent, omniscient, pure infinite Spirit that he may attain supreme peace. The conflict insisted on in Zoroastrianism is regarded as leading to eventual triumph because Ahura Mazda, the wise and righteous Lord, fights on the side of the good. In Islām God is regarded as having made his revelation to the Prophet so that men might learn to accord with His will. The saving grace of God has been so emphasised in Christianity as to appear for some the main characteristic of the religion.

There is another fundamental implication of the religions without recognition of which a philosophy of religion must remain for ever inadequate. The Other than the finite self involved in redemption and salvation only does Its part on Its own terms. There is no bargaining. Man with his freedom may either accept or reject those terms. What are those terms ? Some are expressed as ethical requirements. For the religions these are never the merely temporary moral rules of particular communities, however much these have become incorporated in religious scriptures. They are rather the fundamentals to which these rules are relative, and which they express in part and sometimes erroneously. The implication is essentially the same whether the ethical requirements are described as based on ultimate principles of moral order or as the will of God.

It is, however, patent to the student of religions that something more is involved in salvation than the fulfilment of ordinary ethical requirements. That is seen even in Buddhism which has emphasised the ethical and has been described by some as no more than an ethical movement. A philosophy of religion is here, as always, concerned with the essential implication, not with the specific theoretical doctrine or practice. In Buddhism the form taken is that of the practice of contemplation, described sometimes as leading to a satisfying kind of trance. Advaitist Hinduism and other types of Indian religion point to the necessity of yoga. The descriptions of what is attained are diverse even in Hinduism : there are some expressions as though of a communion with God. It is that phraseology that is definitely accepted in Christianity. Love of God, communion with God, God-realisation—these are terms that go beyond the ethical as ordinarily understood. And without this, salvation, redemption can never be complete. And this involves a twofold relation : the attitude of the finite self and the response of the transcendent.

What is thus involved with reference to religion is not essentially different from what is found with regard to the physical world and human society. To assimilate, to get the benefit of what nature offers, the individual has to adopt the required attitude and action : yet how little he contributes to the result compared with the part nature plays. To profit from his social environment the individual must use his freedom appropriately : yet how little his efforts bring to society compared with what he derives from it. No one can seriously refuse to admit the comparative insignificance of the ordinary individual, even of great communities through history. And yet man has demanded and seems capable of achieving something more, and this he has sought and in no small measure found in the worship of, in unity or communion with, God. A philosophy of religion must make acknowledgement of these facts of actual religion. Again there can be no question of " proof " by reference to what is other than the factors here implicated. These are some of the underivable ultimates that have to be simply accepted or rejected. But, accepted, they provide a standpoint from which man's relations with nature and with his fellow-men may be regarded : their inadequacy to satisfy man entirely may then be understood. And the question may be reasonably asked : Is it not the verdict of history that the individuals who have recognised this, and have given attention to the central and dominant aspects of religion, have attained a peace which their own moral efforts, society, and the realm of physical nature have not given, and apparently cannot give ? And is not that the reason why religions have survived notwithstanding all the defects in their theoretical expressions ?

ALBAN G. WIDGERY

DHARMA RAJYA

FINANCE

[This article of H. Krishna Rao demonstrates that Finance was as important in Ancient India as it is to-day in the West.—EDS.]

Wealth is a necessary appendage of life, individual and public. Such is the experience of all countries in all ages. Wealth and wealth alone, says Kautilya, is important inasmuch as character and desire depend upon wealth for their realisation.* If riches are rooted in the world, then therein are all things rooted. A man without riches is a dead man and a *chandala,* (untouchable).† "All undertakings depend upon finance." Hence foremost attention shall be paid to the treasure. The treasury is the root of the army, the army the root of the treasury. The prosperity of both depends upon the protection of the subjects. Accumulated wealth can never be sufficient for continuous expenditure...Without perpetual income nobody's wealth, not even that of Kubera (the God of Wealth) is sufficient.‡ "Just as fruits are gathered as often as they become ripe so revenue shall be collected as often as it becomes ripe".§ But the acquisition of wealth should not be opposed to Righteousness. Wealth earned wrongfully is the cause of sin. "One should take away by craft, force, robbery, the wealth of the king who is addicted to immoral ways of life".**

The land tax, fines and forfeiture constitute the chief items of revenue.†† The other sources of income are taxes on merchants and artisans. The author of *Sukra Nitisara* recommends :—

(1) Duties (Sulka) : 1/32 to 1/16 *ad valorem.*

(2) Land Revenue : ¼ to ½ of the produce from places irrigated by tanks or rivers and 1/6 from rocky soils.

(3) Royalty from mines : ½ of gold, 1/3 of silver, ¼ of copper, 1/6 of zinc and iron, ½ of gems, after the expenses have been met.

(4) Revenue from the collectors of grasses and woods : 1/20th to 1/3.

(5) Revenue from tax on Livestock : 1/8 of the increase of goats, sheep, cows, buffaloes and horses.

(6) Tax on artisans : one day's work in a fortnight for the State. If the people undertake new industries, cultivate new lands, dig tanks or make canals for their good the king should not demand anything of them until they have realised a profit equalling twice their expenditure.

(7) Tax on usurers : 1/32 of the interest collected.

The following classification of taxes may interest the modern financier. Kautilya instructs the collector-general to collect revenue from :—

(1) Durga (Fort) : tolls, fines, liquor, prostitutes, gambling, artisans.

(2) Rashtra (Country parts) : ferries, boats, pasture land and roads.

(3) Khani (Mines) : all minerals extracted.

(4) Sethu (Bridges and gardens) : flowers, fruit and vegetable gardens and wet lands.

---

* Kautilya. † Brihaspathi. ‡ *Sukra Nitisara.*
§ Kautilya. ** *Sukra Nitisara.* †† *Mahabharata,*

(5) Vana (Forests) : game and timber forests.

(6) Vrija (Herds of cattle) : cows, buffaloes, goats, sheep, asses, camels, horses.

(7) Vanikpatha (Public highways) : land and water ways.

More interesting than these items of revenue are the principles of taxation. As a person desirous of milk never obtains any by cutting off the udders of a cow, similarly a kingdom afflicted by improper methods of taxation never yields any profit to the king. Rulers should take note of sales, purchases and the state of the roads before levying taxes on merchants. Taxes on artisans should be levied after ascertaining the extent of manufacture, receipts and expenditure. Taxes collected should not be so high as to emasculate the people. When there is equity in taxation, when the ruler does not show voraciousness of appetite, the entire kingdom becomes his treasury. It is the paramount duty of the ruler to show sympathy to the poor and to make them happy and not to force taxes from them. It is equally binding on him to convince the people through his agents of the necessity of taxes before they are collected.* The king should not in normal times increase his treasure by augmenting punishment, land revenue and duties.† During times of national danger or financial trouble, the king should receive contributions from the prosperous parts of his kingdom, from citizens and country people or should borrow from the rich.‡

The king should take care to win the support of the aristocracy by appealing to them to advance the interests of the people who are their fellow-subjects.§ Aristocrats who justify their existence by their services to the community deserve to be respected by the king. Those who earn and spend money unrighteously do not deserve to possess wealth and the king is justified in taking away the wealth of such persons.** Persons who offer money of their own accord or with a view to doing good should be honoured with a rank in Court, an umbrella, or a turban . . . in return for their gold.††

The king should promptly collect and carefully preserve the wealth.‡‡ There is great trouble in the earning but fourfold difficulty in the maintenance of wealth. There is no greater fool than one who knows how to earn but not to keep what has been earned.§§ The treasury should be so governed that it could maintain the subjects and the army for a period of twenty years without depending upon fines, land revenue and duties.*† With this object in view the king should see that all items of revenue and expenditure are entered regularly in prescribed registers and are scrutinised by Superintendents. Negligence, carelessness, embezzlement should be punished in proportion to guilt. In short, the aim of the State should be to increase its revenue and to decrease expenditure.

H. KRISHNA RAO

---

* *Mahabharata.* † *Sukra Nitisara.*
‡ Kautilya. § *Mahabharata.* ** *Sukra Nitisara.* †† Kautilya,
‡‡*Sukra Nitisara.* §§Kautilya. *†*Sukra Nitisara.*

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

A SOCIETY OF "SELFS" PRE-EXISTENCE AND REINCARNATION*

Professor Broad examined some years back McTaggart's *Nature of Existence*, Vol. I. He then promised to do the same with regard to Vol. II. This project he has now carried out in two parts. There is little doubt that, in this examination, he has made the philosophy of McTaggart more intelligible to the average reader. He has also added on several important subjects his own independent views, which makes the whole work of much greater philosophical value than the original system.

McTaggart was a constructive metaphysician. And the great merit of his writing is that for every position which he held he gave his grounds and reasons. His conclusions have an important bearing upon philosophical and religious outlook, but his arguments are very technical, and they cannot be fully appreciated by the ordinary reader. We shall therefore omit these technicalities, and try to set out some of his conclusions in their bare nakedness and define our own attitude with regard to them.

The question may be asked : "What exists?" The answer is that substance alone exists. Is any substance simple? No. Every substance is infinitely divisible in some dimension. The question will now be asked : "But what is the content of the existent or what exists truly?" The answer is that certain things, such as matter or sense-data, which appear to exist, do not really exist. There is no real substance which has either material or sensal qualities. Our perception of material and sensible substances must in some sense be misperception ; it must be due to error. This sounds very like Vedantic *avidya*. For according to that system of philosophy too, the ultimate reality is not sensible. It is only misperceived as sensible.

What then is the true nature of substance according to McTaggart? It is spiritual. We know spirit in our own self. We perceive our self. The universe is thus made up of selfs which constitute its primary parts. But we cannot stop with the selfs. No self is simple. Every self has parts. What are these parts? Ostensibly, they are cogitations, feelings and volitions which constitute the life-history of each self. Here McTaggart has a characteristic doctrine. Whatever else these parts are, they are primarily perceptions or, as Broad calls them, prehensions. Each self not only prehends its self and its states, but it can also prehend other selfs and their states.

At this stage, it may be asked : "Does each self live its life in time?" McTaggart tries to prove that time is unreal. This means that the parts which constitute the temporal life of the individual self are not really in time. They form a sort of an inclusion-series. What appears earlier in the life-history is included in the prehension which appears later in the same life-history. But this inclusion-series has an end-term. It is the prehension which includes all the earlier prehensions, but is not itself included. This end-term would appear, *sub specie temporis*, to come at the end of time. It has a duration which is indivisible and at the same time eternal. It is equivalent to what in the popular imagination is regarded as Heaven. According to McTaggart, it is *the only error-free* or right perception. And when you perceive rightly other selfs and their states, there is no room for misunderstanding or antipathy. Sympathy and love are the natural expression of right knowledge. Thus like Vedanta, McTaggart puts in a sense the highest value on right knowledge or true perception.

* *Examination of McTaggart's Philosophy*, Vol. II, Parts I and II. By C. D. Broad, (Cambridge University Press. 45s.)

McTaggart does not believe in God. For him, all selfs have the same reality. He believes in a society of selfs, where each self truly knows every other self and loves every other self. He believes in immortality. But not as Christians do. *Christians do not accept pre-existence or reincarnation. McTaggart appears to be the only Western thinker who accepts these.* According to him, the soul is not created. Nothing is created. Spirit alone is real, and spirit is timelessly real. The soul may appear to be born, and it may appear to die. But that has reference merely to the body. The soul in the body is beginningless and endless. It may take on a particular body and also leave it. But this neither begins nor ends its own true life-history.

This is in short the substance of McTaggart's conclusions presented by him with much argument and subtlety of thought. We shall now point out where we differ. We do not agree with the view that substance must be infinitely divisible, nor with the view that prehensions of a self are parts of it. It is one thing to say that a prehension belongs to me, and another thing to say that it is *part* of me or in some sense *is* me. The self must be distinguished from its prehensions. It has, properly speaking, no parts. The parts belong to the temporal history which we attribute to a self. But the self is not the same thing as its temporal history.

McTaggart bases his whole idea of spirit on the perception by a self of itself. This is natural, for we have no other direct perception of spirit. If we refuse to accept some form of self-intuition, we cannot intelligently speak about spirit at all. But his account of this self-intuition is not true. According to him, each self perceives itself as a certain particular having the quality of self-hood. As we are supposed to perceive sensible particulars, so we are supposed to perceive ourselves. McTaggart thus makes no distinction between our perception of things outside of us and our perception of our own self. The truth is that we never perceive our own self as a certain particular. What may appear to be so perceived, is not the real self, but what is called the empirical ego or *ahaṁkāra*. This empirical ego is not self-identical through any portion of our mental life. It is a kind of inner object, not the true subject. This true subject, which is our self, cannot be reflexively prehended. It is not a particular. It is our only justification for radically distinguishing spirit from matter.

If the self does not prehend itself much less can it prehend other selfs. What then is the evidence for their existence? There is no evidence which can stand scrutiny. All that we can say is that we believe in them as we believe in matter. We ourselves do not live and act through the perception of ourselves as pure spirits. To perceive ourselves as pure spirits is extremely uncommon and difficult. We live and act by the idea of ourselves as embodied egos. The belief has practical value. The same we hold to be true about the reality of other selfs. On McTaggart's own hypothesis we shall say, as our belief in things material is an erroneous belief but we do not on that account treat matter in our behaviour towards it as anything but matter,—so here too, our belief in our own embodied existence and in the embodied existence of other selfs is an erroneous belief, but we cannot on that account refuse to act on the belief as though it were a right belief. If we see things as they are, or as they would be in right knowledge, there is no justification for the belief in many selfs or in a society of selfs as the ultimate reality.

Broad thinks that the merits of McTaggart's treatment of the problem of time is that he does not shirk certain fundamental issues as most other philosophers holding similar views do. Time may be unreal. But there is an apparent sequence of events. If these events are not related temporally, they must be related in some other way. Broad thinks that McTaggart is perhaps the only philosopher who has indicated this other way. It is the way of the inclusion-series or the C-series as it is called. But is this really a merit? We think it is not. If time is real, then some

meaning must be found for it in the concept of absolute change. We shall have to say that somewhere change is quite real. But if time is unreal, then change in any form is unreal. Can we say that the terms constituting sequence are nevertheless real, but that they are non-temporally related as McTaggart supposes? We think that this would be a wholly false abstraction from reality. The terms are really events. We get them by breaking up a real process. But if the process is unreal, can the terms survive? It is not that we are given a set of terms and a temporal relation between them, and that we then go forward to prove that the temporal relation is unreal and that some other non-temporal relation holds between them. If we deny the reality of process, we deny the reality of the terms in that process. What then must we substitute? We must substitute something that is changeless and eternal. This something cannot be a set of terms or a group of entities united together by a non-temporal relation. As soon as we think of a group and some relation between the members of the group, we cannot avoid temporal process altogether. A timeless relation will not relate. It will be part of being itself. There is thus no alternative to the unreality of time except unrelated being. The alternative of terms being non-temporally related is quite spurious. McTaggart in this respect has not shown himself wiser than other philosophers who all repudiated the reality of time, but just the opposite.

It is however a pleasure to us to note that McTaggart has recognised the validity of an idea which is a mere truism with Hindu philosophers, but which is regarded in the West, and especially by Christian writers, as a quixotic belief unsupported by any valid argument. This is the eternity of the souls, and the belief which it implies in their pre-existence and their post-existence. Broad too is sympathetic with this idea, although he thinks that the question of the relation of the soul to the body must be satisfactorily answered before the belief can claim to be philosophically justifiable.

The book contains much hard thinking on a great variety of philosophical subjects by two eminent minds of Great Britain, and there can be no doubt of its high value as philosophical literature. Its defect is the defect of most European writings in this sphere—a narrow view of experience, and too great a reliance on the free, speculative and imaginative side of our thought. Thought is not anchored on any great experience. The result is that we get systems of philosophy with endless distinctions and subtleties of thought, but with no great insight or intuition into the ultimate nature of things. The conclusions established —after a great labour of thought—appear to us inconclusive, flimsy, uninteresting and offering no great ideal of knowledge to work for.

G. R. MALKANI

Peter Kürten : A Study in Sadism. By GEORGE GODWIN. (Acorn Press, London. 5s.)

This sketch was written originally as an introduction to the English translation of Professor Karl Berg's *Der Sadist*, an exhaustive study of Peter Kürten, the Düsseldorf "monster", by the psychiatrical expert of the Criminal Court before which Kürten appeared after his arrest in 1930. It is doubtful if any useful purpose is served by the issue, for consumption by the general public, of these clinical studies of abnormal cases, though Mr. Godwin can plead to a desire to further the cause of penal reform. On the other hand, this sketch may be recommended to those good people who are inclined to shut their eyes to the possibilities of the lower octaves of human nature, and whose moral judgments are apt to be, in their severity, in exact proportion to their own environmental lack of temptation!

We agree with the author that Kürten's case is one of "perversion difficult to parallel in the literature of psychopathology", even though we may not

wholeheartedly subscribe to the Freudian or any other psycho-analytical interpretation of the revolting sexual and sadistic activities of Kürten. We feel that Mr. Godwin is inclined to place too much emphasis upon environmental factors, particularly Kürten's long prison terms, as explanation of the development of the perversions that marked this criminal's character, and we doubt the value of the suggestion that every prison should have its psychiatrical experts, especially having regard to the late Mr. J. W. N. Sullivan's dictum that "psychoanalysis bids fair to rival Christianity in the number of its sects" (*Limitations of Science*). We are reinforced in this opinion by the charming remark of Professor Hubner, of Bonn, quoted by Mr. Godwin. It appears that young Kürten quite deliberately drowned two of his playmates, while playing on a raft, by thrusting them into the tide. Professor Hubner observed, at Kürten's trial: "Many children, otherwise nice, do such things"!

We feel that the author comes much nearer to the truth when he remarks that we have here "the operation of a monstrous and unique egotism", and a case of "spiritual anæsthesia". Without Reincarnation, and the laws that govern its operations, it is inconceivable that any explanation of such abnormality can be accepted that does not do violence to one's sense of justice. Human nature is bound to be an enigma if we view it from the standpoint of materialistic science or theological dogmatism. Long ago H. P. Blavatsky pointed out that the "odic and magnetic currents of the Astral Light often incite to murder, drunkenness, immorality", and that "between the *psychic* and the *noëtic*, between the *Personality* and the *Individuality*, there exists the same abyss as between a 'Jack the Ripper' and a holy Buddha". The dangers of passive mediumship are not sufficiently well known to the modern generation. Kürten's case is a solemn warning to those who wilfully ignore the perils of taking the "easy road" in face of "the opposing forces of spirituality and animalism".

B. P. HOWELL

Svetasvatara Upanishad. By SWAMI THYAGISANANDA. (Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. As. 12.)

The *Svetasvatara Upanishad* is one of the important scriptural texts. It speaks of the sublime aspiration of the soul for spiritual illumination and gives out some of the immortal Truths which spiritual seekers experience. Hence its teachings are not fully set forth in a philosophic dissertation. They represent the truths obtained by realisation. Though the spirit of devotion and the devotional approach are manifestly evident in the text, still the final emphasis is laid on the Advaita. But as the author has truly said in the Introduction:

> It contains passages which are allied in thought to Dvaita (dualism), Visishtadvaita (qualified non-dualism), Advaita (non-dualism) and other branches of Vedanta.

The book is quite a good one. The author has taken pains to make the meanings of the text clear by his copious and learned notes, which will be helpful for understanding the philosophic implications. These notes give us the meanings of the ancient text in the terms of modern thought.

The *Svetasvatara Upanishad* is really an attempt, as the author has pointed out in the Introduction, to reconcile the conflicting philosophic and religious views and therefore is the more interesting, inasmuch as it has not rejected the claims of the different parts of our composite being but has traced out the stages of illumination through which the yearning soul advances till final liberation is reached. It really represents the attempt through which the soul sees the divine causation in the cycle of existence, feels the stirring of the divine in life, and finally attains identity with It. This is indeed the Path that has to be travelled in our Eternal Quest.

MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR

War Can Be Averted. By ELEANOR E. RATHBONE, M.P. (Victor Gollancz, Ltd., London. 5*s.*)

The Moral Basis of Politics. By NAOMI MITCHISON. (Constable and Co., Ltd., London. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

Here are two books by English women on political subjects. Miss Rathbone is a member of Parliament with great political experience; and Mrs. Mitchison is known chiefly as a writer of historical romances. Miss Rathbone's book is an argument in favour of the use of collective force under the League system for the maintenance of peace against bellicose dictators. It is brilliantly written, vigorous and persuasive. Although it is concerned mainly with the political groups in England and is intended to unite all these in favour of peace against the National Government, its argument has a wider scope. Miss Rathbone shows that the League system, if taken seriously, is practical and can be made effectual. Her attack on the extreme pacifists, who would not use force in any case, is quite conclusive. Her book is in the great tradition of English political writing, clearly thought out and cogently argued. If there is one criticism that can be made, it is that the argument in favour of collective force implies assumptions which Miss Rathbone does not explicitly work out—for example, if Nations are to fight together for a common purpose, they must have the habit of co-operation in other issues and over a period of years; but that habit has not actually been formed among the members of the League.

Mrs. Mitchison deals with the very old problem of the moral standards underlying or directing political action; but she does not show any knowledge of earlier work that has been done on the same subject. Her view of moral standards is somewhat vague. She seems to believe that "the good", as she calls it, consists mainly in personal relationships vaguely conceived in terms of sympathy or love. But she has not analysed what she means by any of these terms. Indeed, she confesses that she is not trained as a scientist to deal with ethical theory. Her political suggestions also are indefinite. She expresses the opinion that life in Russia comes nearest at present to what she desires to bring into existence elsewhere, but she offers no evidence for her preference. Again, politics for her, seems to be largely a question of some sort of indefinite influence over other people; and she does not even mention the normal interests of practical politics—for example, public health, education, transport and commerce. Her book is easily written and contains some interesting examples of the views taken by the small class of intellectuals in London.

C. DELISLE BURNS

The Message of Buddha. By A. S. WADIA, M.A. (J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., London. 3*s.* 6*d.*)

This is the sixth of the "Message Series" of books in which Professor Wadia has attempted to re-state the speculative basis and the dogmatic framework of the great religions of the world. As in the earlier volumes, the presentation is both lucid and scholarly. Beginning with a rapid survey of the life and times of the Buddha, the author devotes the greater part of the work to an examination of the main tenets of Buddhism and concludes with a chapter on the future of that religion.

Although Professor Wadia sees in the Buddha "the greatest thinker the world has ever known", he is profoundly distrustful of the Master's teachings. The Second Noble Truth, *Tanha*—"desire", as the cause of *Dukkha*, or "pain"— is not a truth at all, he says, but "only an unprovable generalisation based on debatable assumptions". The conception of *Dukkha* itself is a "half-truth", and the Eightfold Path is a "relative and partial truth". "There never was nor can there ever be an entire Cessation of *Dukkha*, much less of its subtler servitor—*Tanha*." Finally, Buddhism is summed up as a Creed of Negation,

"the most deadly creed that could be preached". And Professor Wadia believes that the Buddha himself is "what Freud would call 'an Obsessional Neurotic' whose obsession was 'the Demon of Dukkha', whose *idée fixe* was 'the treachery of *Tanha*', and whose sedulously-nurtured abhorrence of Earthly Existence had with the passage of time developed into a definite and an unmistakable *psychopathia* against Life itself".

It would be impossible to attempt to discuss these views in a brief note of this character. We may be allowed to suggest, however, that there seem to be ambiguities inherent in Professor Wadia's approach to the subject and in his conception of the relation of religion to life. Meanwhile, there can be no doubt that he has presented us with what is on the whole an objective treatment of Buddhism which will be found useful by all those who are beginning to take an interest in these matters.

K. S. SHELVANKAR

China, Body and Soul. By GILBERT MURRAY, LAURENCE BINYON, ROGER FRY, E. R. HUGHES, INNES JACKSON, H. J. LASKI, BASIL MATTHEWS, EILEEN POWER, RUSSELL PASHA, Sir ARTHUR SALTER and ARTHUR WALEY. Edited by E. R. HUGHES. (Martin Secker and Warburg, Ltd., London. 3*s.*)

There is an air of easy spontaneity about this little book which makes it good reading. It is a series of brief glimpses into a great civilisation and appreciations of a fine people, each the kind of thing you might draw from a man in conversation, and therefore memorable without being exhaustive. Whether it is Waley's account of the two philosophers, Eileen Power's story of the little god, or Hughes on the village scholar (to select three contributions as samples), the curious fineness of the Chinese character is well reflected. To those readers who do not know of this already, here is a pleasant introduction; to others it will come as a reminder, and perhaps a sad one, since no one knows how much of China will survive the bombs and occupation of alien armies.

The contributors and editor of the volume have been moved by that contingency, and are devoting the proceeds of the sale of their book to the relief of distress in China. The best tribute to their work is to say that after reading it, one must wish the book a million sale.

JACK COMMON

The Light of the Mind. By BENONI B. and HELEN STONE GATTELL. (Dorrance and Co., Philadelphia. $1·75.)

High claims are made for this condensation by two of Mr. Harold W. Percival's disciples, of a central idea in his *Thinking and the Law of Thought*. Mr. Percival's long prominence in the Theosophical Society of New York notwithstanding, his philosophy is not the age-old system of thought restated by Madame Blavatsky. He sets Karma at naught and robs life of meaning by his assertion that "the outer conditions of riches, possessions, success, upon which some predicate injustice or caprice in human affairs, come to everyone in orderly turns". He explains Reincarnation as the embodiment by turns of successive fixed twelfths of the soul.

Mr. Gattell holds that the consistency of the many things Mr. Percival said "within the vast compass of nature and of the still greater number of things within the narrow range relating to the soul in a human being, should convince any thinker that these things cannot be otherwise". Honesty compels the reviewer to court the implied stigma by confessing himself unconvinced.

Be Mr. Percival's powers what they may, how can a reasoning mind accept any statements on one man's unsupported *ipse dixit*? The reader's hesitation

is increased by the summary treatment meted out to some facts of common observation, to make them fit the theories advanced. Insistence on a fourfold classification, for example, is carried to the point of making the senses total four. We are asked to accept smell and touch as manifestations of a single sense.

The style is heavy, but the book is not without illuminating gleams, half-lost though most of them seem to be in fog.

PH. D.

Evolution Without Natural Selection. By J. C. McKERROW. (Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., London. 1s.)

The author contends that life must be accepted as a "four-dimensional process" to conceive the nature of natural process and of all systems of activity from stars and atoms to men. Life is "habit". The axiom that action tends to be repeated does not preclude relatively novel modes of vital action which can initiate habits. Acquired characteristics may be heritable. "All living things that *occur* are *equally* fit in principle to *survive*."

These are some of the theses of Dr. McKerrow, who declares :—

> "God does not geometrize" like a mathematician ; the "process of nature" is a "geometry of chance" *in the concrete.*

He sees evolution from sentience to "sapience" as "the transition from instinctive to customary behaviour", rejects as incredible "the old concept of the 'soul'" and pronounces the occurrence of ideas "not a psychological but a biological process". Yet he is scarcely a materialist *pur sang* or he could hardly have written :—

> Our anthropoid ancestors began to become human in beginning to learn at second-hand...We may be sure that the first of our ancestors who may properly be called men were even less inclined than the reader ...to give up the primacy of the individual mind in the conditioning of human behaviour ; he might well be willing to give up, very largely, the primacy of his own mind, but only to the minds of wiser contemporaries whose wisdom, again, had been handed down from the wiser men of a Golden Age, godlike men or men who had walked with gods.

His general ignoring of the spiritual side of evolution, however, will disappoint those who feel that the theories of biology need revision in the light of discoveries regarding the structure of matter, the conception of a space-time continuum, and psychic research. The suspicion is growing that only the form of man evolved from the animal kingdom and that the Divine Spark has a far nobler origin.

KEITH PERCY

Man's Latent Powers. By PHŒBE PAYNE, with a Preface by E. GRAHAM HOWE. (Faber and Faber Ltd., London. 7*s.* 6*d.*)

This is a reasonable and balanced approach to the study of the psychic powers still latent in most men. Its distinction between negative and positive psychism, between mediumship and the deliberate exercise of the psychic faculties is particularly valuable.

A psychic sensitive from childhood, Miss Payne has cultivated the attitude of detached observation of her own innate powers and of those of others. She experimented with mediumship but came to the conclusion, true though considerably understated, that "almost everything accomplished under mediumistic conditions can, with training, be much more effectively and accurately done by the psychic himself". She differentiates clearly between Raja and Hatha Yoga and warns against breathing practices, automatic writing and "circles for development".

With all these points in its favour, the book suffers in some directions from pseudo-Theosophy's having given a wrong lead to the author's expectancy. All superphysical vision is qualified not only by the grade of a man's soul, but also by his ability to translate correctly the vibrations which impinge upon his consciousness. In that regard the self-tutored seer is at an insuperable disadvantage.

PH. D.

CORRESPONDENCE

PSYCHIC SCIENCE AND CRIME

[Mr. Louis S. Vernon-Worsley is the Founder and Leader of the Manchester Psychic Science Fellowship. He is Past President of the Manchester Central Spiritualist Church. He is a late member of C. S. C. U. Council and Chairman of the Lancashire County Committee. He is also a contributor to Psychic and Occult journals.—EDS.]

Investigation and development of scientific methods of *Detection* of Crime continually occupy many keen intellects, but we feel the same amount of attention has not been bestowed on the *Causation* of Crime, particularly in those cases which appear to defy ordinary explanation.

Time and again criminologists are baffled by the commission of indictable offences by people of high character and respectability, with no evidence of criminal propensities or history. No explanation being forthcoming by the ordinary methods of deduction, after the case has been dealt with by the Court, further investigation of any particular case is apparently at an end as far as the authorities are concerned. This is not always so, however, with the relatives and friends of the delinquents, and time and again the question is asked—but not in any unkind manner—"Whatever made you do it?" to which the answer is invariably the same, "I don't know."

Psychologists have been consulted on numerous occasions in an attempt to clear up these mysterious cases, but I am afraid they have been able to give little help except in certain instances. To act as they continue to do, on the old assumption that the brain is the organ of thought and consciousness is, in my opinion, making solution more difficult, but immediately we begin to tackle this admittedly abstract problem from the psychic viewpoint, many astounding possibilities present themselves for consideration.

Believing as I do that the Aura is the field of operation of certain sense perceptions, passed on to that great nerve ganglion, the Solar Plexus, by a vibrational band attachment, the door is partly opened to tracking down the original source of either desired or unwanted impressions. In my view, the human organism is a species of delicately balanced electrical instrument capable of both reception and transmission—a miniature broadcasting station as it were—and thus we are capable of being used consciously or otherwise at any time, for the reception or dissemination of sound or thought waves. As an illustration of this, we might cite the fact of how much we can be influenced by people in the physical body with whom we are in daily contact, and how on certain occasions we are attracted or repelled by contact with various kinds of personalities.

Accepting the hypothesis that, on physical death, we transfer our personality to the vibrational or etheric body which we assume on passing into the next dimension, it does not appear unreasonable to suppose that we also carry with us the characteristics which marked our own activities whilst resident on this Earth Plane.

How much more easy therefore must it be for vibrational entities, who have no longer the density of the physical body to consider, to impress or even to obtain complete access to, our Auras and through that medium or channel to express their desires, either legitimate or otherwise? The analogy to such an operation is the action of the Hertzian waves (which after all are vibrations too) in passing through, without let or hindrance, many varied kinds of what are often erroneously termed *solid* bodies. The law of vibration has been too long accepted as a fact to be here disputed.

Acknowledging, as we are compelled to

do, that human beings are a blend of many shades of personality, it becomes increasingly apparent, the more we examine the evidence available, that those beings who during their Earth life have spent time in the commission of crimes for which they have been punished in the usual way, will naturally seek for an outlet for such propensities in their new environment. Given that they are enjoying the added advantages of extra-dimensional vision and knowledge of supernormal laws, they will, I venture to suggest, find little difficulty in influencing emotional types of people for the continuation of their previous nefarious activities, with the object of gratifying their own lusts but with disastrous consequences to the physical entity who is unfortunate enough to come under their dominion or influence.

Here, we then consider, is a clue to the possible causation of many puzzling offences against the moral code. It points to unending possibilities, which I know have often been pooh-poohed by the Authorities here, but in Greece—that ancient home of culture and learning—the police are regularly and whole-heartedly collaborating with the Society for Psychic Research at Athens with a view to elucidating crimes of an inexplicable nature.

In conclusion, may I say that I have been investigating this subject privately for a number of years, and have a file of information which I offered to place at the disposal of the Conference of World Police Chiefs held in London last summer, but my offer was not accepted. As the law in this country stands at the present time in regard to psychic investigation I suppose I should not feel surprised at the official attitude.

To those sceptical minds who regard what they call this no-man's-land of activity as inviolable territory which is not intended to be explored, we would recommend a careful study of the posthumous address of the late Lord Rutherford read by Sir James Jeans at the Indian Science Congress held at Calcutta recently, which envisages still more remarkable developments in scientific achievement; and although the realm of the psychic or supernormal activity is still the *bête noire* of many people of undoubted intelligence, we feel sure the day will come when the next dimension and perhaps others will be understood, at least as much as the physical world is to-day.

I hope the theory I have put forward will stimulate further thought and interest in this outstanding human problem and, sooner or later, I consider the Authorities here will be obliged to extend their field of investigation along the lines here indicated, maybe in conjunction with psychiatric clinics.

LOUIS S. VERNON-WORSLEY

Salford,
Lancashire.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

[The following extracts from various writers of various countries and of various ages, demonstrate the universality of the belief in the doctrine of Reincarnation.—EDS.]

As a goldsmith, having taken a piece of gold, maketh another form, new and more beautiful, so verily the Self having cast off this body and having put away ignorance, maketh another new and more beautiful form.—*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*

If a Bikkhu should desire, O brethren, to call to mind his various temporary states in days gone by—such as one birth, two births, three, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, fifty, one hundred, or one thousand, or one hundred thousand births—in all their modes and all their details, let him be devoted to quietude of heart—let him look through things, let him be much alone.—*Akankhayasutta*

There was a great god-sage called Nârada..... He travelled everywhere, and one day he was passing through a forest, and he saw a man who had been meditating until the white ants had built a huge mound round his body, so long had he been sitting in that position. He said to Nârada, "Where are you going?" Nârada replied, "I am going to heaven." "Then ask God when He will be merciful to me, when I shall attain freedom." Further on Nârada saw another man. He was jumping about, singing and dancing, and he said, "O Nârada, where are you going?" Nârada said, "I am going to heaven." "Then ask when I shall attain freedom." So Nârada went on. In the course of time he came again by the same road, and there was the man who had been meditating till the ant-hill had grown round him. He said, "O Nârada, did you ask the Lord about me?" "O yes." "What did He say?" "The Lord told me that you would attain freedom in four more births." Then the man began to weep and wail, and said, "I have meditated until an ant-hill has been raised around me, and I have to endure four more births yet!" Nârada went on to the other man. "Did you ask about me?" "O yes. Do you see this tamarind tree? I have to tell you that as many leaves as there are on that tree, so many times you will be born, and then you will attain freedom." Then the man began to dance for joy, and said, "After so short a time I shall be free!" A voice came, "My child, you shall have freedom this instant."—*Kurma Purâna*

The Egyptians were the first who propounded the theory that the human soul is immortal and that, when the body of any one perishes, it enters into some other creature that may be born ready to receive it, and that when it has gone the round of all created forms on land, in water and in air, then it once more enters a human body born for it; and this cycle of existence for the soul takes place in three thousand years.—HERODOTUS

What appears to us to be an accurate definition of justice does not also appear to be so to the Gods. For we, looking at that which is most brief, direct our attention to things present, and to this momentary life, and the manner in which it subsists. But the powers that are superior to us know the whole life of the Soul, and all its former lives; and in consequence of this, if they inflict a certain punishment in obedience to the entreaties of those that invoke them, they do not inflict it without justice, but looking at the offences committed by souls in former lives: which men, not perceiving, think that they unjustly fall into the calamities which they suffer.—IAMBLICHUS

He who believes that he transmigrates, after death, into the body of a beast or a plant is grossly mistaken ; he is ignorant of the fact that the essential form of the soul cannot change, that it is and it remains human, and only metaphorically speaking does virtue make of it a god and vice an animal.—HIEROCLES

Among them [the Druids] the doctrine of Pythagoras had force, namely, that the souls of men are undying, and that after a fixed number of years they begin to live again, the soul passing into another body. —DIODORUS OF SICILY

Is it not more in conformity with reason that every soul for certain mysterious reasons (I speak now according to the opinion of Pythagoras and Plato and Empedocles, whom Celsus frequently names) is introduced into a body, and introduced according to its deserts and former actions ? ....

Is it not rational that souls should be introduced into bodies, in accordance with their merits and previous deeds, and that those who have used their bodies in doing the utmost possible good should have a right to bodies endowed with qualities superior to the bodies of others ?—ORIGEN

Those who, in the season of prosperity, experience pain and grief, suffer them on account of their words or deeds in a former body, for which the Most Just now punisheth them.—*The Desatir*

Tell me what destiny has in store for us ? Wherefore has it bound us so closely to each other ? Ah ! in bygone times thou must have been my sister or my wife .... and there remains, from the whole of those past ages, only one memory, hovering like a doubt above my heart, a memory of that truth of old that is ever present in me.—GOETHE

When we die, we throw off our individuality, like a worn-out garment, and rejoice because we are about to receive a new and better one. .... Were an Asiatic to ask me for a definition of Europe, I should be forced to answer him : It is that part of the world which is haunted by the incredible delusion that man was created out of nothing, and that his present birth is his first entrance into life.—SCHOPENHAUER

The whole creation is a perpetual ascension, from brute to man, from man to God. To divest ourselves more and more of matter, to be clothed more and more with spirit, such is the law. Each time we die we gain more of life.—VICTOR HUGO

What is incorruptible must also be ungenerable. The soul, therefore, if immortal, existed before our birth. .... The metempsychosis is therefore the only system of this kind that philosophy can hearken to.—DAVID HUME

It is not more surprising to be born twice than once ; everything in Nature is resurrection.—VOLTAIRE

REINCARNATION

The Great and Ancient Doctrine answers many puzzles of science, philosophy and religion

Theosophy offers complete and precise information on

REINCARNATION

The Ocean of Theosophy by W. Q. JUDGE

Some of the points considered in this book are:—

What Is Reincarnation?
Who or What Reincarnates?
Why Do We Not Become Animals?
The Meaning of Transmigration
The Reason for Birth and Suffering
Increase and Decrease of Population
Arguments For and Against Reincarnation

The Key to Theosophy by H. P. BLAVATSKY

(Treats this doctrine by means of questions and answers)

Why do we not remember our past lives? This frequent question is dealt with from all points of view and is answered in detail.

U. L. T. Pamphlets Nos. 8-9-10

Reincarnation in Western Religions by W. Q. JUDGE

1. Reincarnation in Judaism and the Bible
2. Christian Fathers on Reincarnation

Reincarnation, Memory, Heredity by H. P. BLAVATSKY and W. Q. JUDGE

1. Reincarnation and Memory
2. Is Heredity a Puzzle?
3. The Storehouse of Memory

Reincarnation by H. P. BLAVATSKY and W. Q. JUDGE

1. A Logical Necessity
2. The Problem of Infant Death
3. The Problem of Sex

THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY, Los Angeles
THEOSOPHY COMPANY (INDIA), LTD., London
and
51, Esplanade Road, Bombay, India.

THE ARYAN PATH

The Aryan Path is the Noble Path of all times. The word "Aryan" is not used in its modern political, ethnological and anthropological sense. The Aryan Path stands for all that is noble in East and West alike, from the ancient times to modern days. It stands for the Ancient Way of spiritual development and growth in holiness, rooted in knowledge, and it can be walked by Brahmanas and Mlecchas, by Jews and Gentiles and by philanthropists of any political school.

CONTENTS FOR MAY 1938

ADULT EDUCATION
EDUCATION IN ANCIENT INDIA—*By Radhakumud Mookerji*
I.—THE SCHOOL
II.—THE GOAL
EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY—*By James Truslow Adams*
THE ANTIOCH SYSTEM AND THE WARDHA SCHEME—*By S. Srikantaya*
TRAINING THE HAND—*By L. P. Jacks*
EDUCATION AND REINCARNATION—*By S. S. Suryanarayana Shastri*
EDUCATIONAL REORGANIZATION AND INDIA'S WORLD MISSION—*By J. M. Kumarappa*
DHARMA RAJYA—EDUCATION OF THE PRINCE—*By H. Krishna Rao*
SPIRITUAL EDUCATION OF A CHILD—*By Stella Gibbons*
NEW BOOKS AND OLD—
EDUCATING THE SIXTH SENSE—*By Raj Narain*
JAPANESE BUDDHISM—*By B. C. Law*
REVIEWS—*By Occultus; Mark Benney; W. Stede; B. P. Howell; Ajit Prasada and K. S. Shelvankar*
CORRESPONDENCE—
THE REALISM OF MADHVA—*By R. Naga Raja Sarma*
ENDS & SAYINGS: EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP

TO APPEAR IN JULY AND AFTER

KARMA—WHAT ITS REALISATION ENTAILS—*By Gerald Heard*
KARMA, REINCARNATION AND THE INDIVIDUAL—*By Hugh I'A. Fausset*
SPIRITUAL SHOPKEEPING—*By Ernest V. Hayes*
NON-ATTACHED MAN AND FREE SOCIETY—*By Sri Krishna Prem*
THE MANDAEANS AND LIFE AFTER DEATH—*By E. S. Drower*
A GLIMPSE OF THE VEDIC WOMAN—*By Atulananda Chakrabarti*
THE UNREALISED SENSE—*By Jack Common*
TAO AND ITS GLOZES—*By Lawrence Durrel*
A DIALOGUE ON PHYSICALISM—*By Professor J. C. Gregory*

Per Annum—Rs. 6 India; 12*s.* Europe; $3 America.
Single Copy—As. 12 India; 1*s.* 6*d.* Europe; 35 cents America.

Printed by M. N. Kulkarni at the Karnatak Printing Press, Karnatak House, Chira Bazar, Bombay 2, and published by K. N. Panday, Theosophy Company (India), Ltd., 51, Esplanade Road, Bombay, India.